Earl of Guilford
Wroxton Abbey

MEMOIRS

OF

GEORGE FRED. COOKE, ESQ.

LATE OF

The Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

BY

WILLIAM DUNLAP, ESQ.

COMPOSED PRINCIPALLY

FROM THE PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE AUTHOR, AND FROM

THE MANUSCRIPT JOURNALS LEFT BY MR. COOKE.

COMPRISING

ORIGINAL ANECDOTES OF HIS THEATRICAL CONTEMPORARIES,

HIS OPINIONS ON VARIOUS DRAMATIC WORKS, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE.

CHAPTER XIX.

Journal, Nov. and Dec. 1807—Remarks on the Provok'd Husband—Martin Luther—Military Excellence—Taste of a Lord Chancellor—Bonaparte—Correspondence with Mr. Rock—Politics—Remarks on Mrs. Inchbald's Remarks—Cure for the Hydrophobia—Shylock and his Representatives—"History of Westmoreland"—Town of Appleby—Madame Catalani—Crown Prince of Denmark—Diet, &c. at Appleby.

WE will now see the picture, which Mr. Cooke paints of himself, in his melancholy solitude at Appleby.

("Continued from No. 2.")

(He commences abruptly, with extracts from some book which he had probably been reading, giving an account of Sheffield, and Leeds, their manufactures, &c.)

"*Saturday, Nov. 28th.*

"Arose between nine and ten; breakfasted. A considerable quantity of snow has fallen during the night. Lounged away the morning, though it was pleasant—dined about a quarter past one. Turned over a part of West's Guide. Read the comic scenes of a Journey to London, or the Provok'd Husband—how admirably just are the characters drawn! Compare Sir Francis, his wife, son, daughter, and John Moody, with the many attempts to imitate them, particularly the latter, and they shine as diamonds of the first water, contrasted with Bristol stones; and their intrinsic value, different in as great a proportion. An idle afternoon, of a piece with the morning. Drank tea a little after five. I sent to the stationer's for two small memorandum books, and procured one thick one, not quite so bad as I expected. However, I shall not make use of it on the present occasion. This vender of ink, paper, and quills, for I could not get any pens, formerly had something in the shape of a circulating library, but marrying a milliner, he found his better half must be accommodated with some place to exhibit her skill in ornamenting the outside of the female head, (a country circulating library often helps to turn the inside, and deprave the heart,) he wisely retrenched and abridged his wares, and divided, not the house, but the shop, with her. Passed some time in writing. Supped between eight and nine."

(Here follow several extracts, probably transcribed from some book of selections.)

"Went to bed at eleven."

"*Sunday, Nov. 29th.*

"Arose at ten; breakfasted. Spent some time in writing. Read the character of Martin Luther from Doctor Robertson."

(Here follow extracts.)

"Thus far the Doctor. It certainly does not strengthen the Lutheran cause, when it is considered that the flaming zeal of that Reformer broke forth in consequence of anger and disappointment; and that his dogmas were not less obstinately and pertinaciously pursued, than those of his opponents—As to his disinterestedness, it must be observed that pride will sometimes produce very opposite effects. Dined about one."

(Characters of Lord Bolingbroke and Pope from Lord Chesterfield.)

"Wrote some more in the afternoon. Drank tea a little after five. Read some letters of several eminent persons, deceased, and made some short extracts from them. It is, to me, often disgusting, to find men of learning, genius, and wit, in their epistolary correspondence, paying each other the most egregious and fulsome flattery and adulation. Even Swift, at the same time that he is venting his spleen and disappointment, is not behind the worst of them.

"Supped between eight and nine. The day has been gloomy, and the atmosphere threatens more snow. I in vain endeavoured to discover any appearance of the sun's eclipse this forenoon. This evening began a kind of dramatic journal, or chronicle; commencing with the first ideas I ever entertained of the stage, the first play I ever read, and the first play I ever saw acted; I shall endeavour to continue it up to the present time. Went to bed a quarter before eleven."

"*Monday*, *Nov. 30th.*

"Arose between nine and ten; breakfasted. A cabinet-maker came to inspect my writing-desk, and gain me an entrance to some private drawers. Had the desk not been injured in its journey from London, I should never have known that it contained three small private drawers, which have never been opened since I purchased it. Dined about half past one; being St. Andrew's day, I drank to the health and prosperity of all friends in Scotland, in a half pint bumper of what used to be called *humble port*, but thanks to the increase of our wealth, at least of our taxes, it now deserves a more exalted appellation. The time before dinner was chiefly employed in continuing my chronicle—dined at half past one, packed up my theatrical vestments, inspected the contents of three private drawers, dressed, and drank tea some time after five. Between tea and supper employed with my chronicle—after supper the chronicle again amused some time—I do not doubt but many, or at least several, circumstances which I shall mention, have already been remarked and commented on; but except theatrics, I shall very rarely, if at all, mention any other business.—This evening a little indisposed; my spirits are sometimes in a pleasing order, but on a sudden a reverse takes place; my mind is at this time rather oppressed.—The minutes are wasting, and nothing positively fixed. The want of books is severely felt. If I had properly foreseen, I might, in some measure, have provided a remedy against the evil; now I could wish to avoid encumbering myself with any thing additional. The day has been wet, cold, and uncomfortable; the latter part better than the former. "The gloomy month of November," as it is called by one of our writers, is very near its close. Went to bed a quarter before eleven."

"*Tuesday*, *Dec.* 1*st.*

"Arose about half past ten; breakfasted; the cabinet maker brought home my desk; I now find, that I never, 'till this morning, knew how to open it—instead of three private drawers I now have six. Forwarded my time-piece some minutes—continued my chronicle. Dined about a quarter past one—read "the Mirror of the Times," for Saturday last. From the number of advertised medicines, and the mention of almost every species of complaint or disease for which they are asserted to be infallible nostrums, the bills of mortality ought to be very much decreased—inspection into this dangerous traffic is surely wanting from some quarter.

"Military excellence—A captain of volunteers undertook for a wager, to trundle a hoop, *rather heavier than a boy's*, from Whitechapel church, to Ongar in Essex, in three hours and a half. How shall the sequel be mentioned?—The Captain *lost.*

"Want of taste of the Lord Chancellor.—In an argument before him, upon the Opera-House business, wherein Madame Catalani and Madame Grassini were mentioned, his Lordship observed, "If you would ask me what I would give myself, I tell you plainly that I would not give five shillings, to hear any of them sing for five months."

"I read the death of Mrs. Macklin, widow of the late Mr. Charles Macklin. Drank tea, about a quarter after five. The time between tea and supper employed in looking over and adjusting receipts, papers, and letters. Supped before nine. Continued my chronicle. The day has been raw and squally. At evening it rained. Went to bed a quarter after eleven."

"*Wednesday, Dec. 2nd.*

"Arose about a quarter after ten; breakfasted. From that time till dinner, continued my chronicle. Dined between one and two. While continuing "The Chronicle," received a letter from Mr. Rock at Edinburgh, in answer to the last I wrote to him. Drank tea about five; read "The Commercial Chronicle" for Saturday last. A paragraph states, that "a person genteelly dressed, called at the house where Mr. Cooke, of Covent Garden Theatre, resides, when in town, and inquired if Mr. Cooke was come. Upon being answered in the negative, he exclaimed, it was strange, for he had travelled with him in the coach the night before, and that he appointed to meet him there next morning. He then asked for pen and ink, and was answered, there was not any ink in the house. He then asked for a tumbler of water, and while the attendant was gone for it, walked off with a bundle of linen, that was in the parlour he had been shown into." I must own my curiosity would be gratified in beholding this unknown fellow-traveller. Mrs. Macklin's death is mentioned in this paper. Continued "The Chronicle;" supped between eight and nine. Rock has copied my two last letters in his I received to-day, to point out that the latter contradicts the former. The conclusion of the latter does that interpretation entirely away. However, he must have a decisive letter by Friday's post. I hope and trust I shall hear from somebody in London to-morrow. "The Chronicle" must excuse me for any further progress this night. Looked over the northern part of the map of England. Tumbled over the few books I have, and gave a glance into Housman. The day has been blowing, cold, gloomy, and wet; towards evening calm, and indicated frost. Went to bed a quarter before midnight."

"*Thursday, December, 3d.*

"Arose about nine; breakfasted; the morning frosty, clear, and pleasant. Dressed. Read the Cumberland Packet for Tuesday last. Among other articles, the death of the Reverend Mr. Wanilaw, a Roman Catholic clergyman, at Newcastle upon Tyne, with whom I was acquainted. The death of Abraham Newland, is also announced. I read in a London paper, the duty, upon proving his will at the Commons, amounted to 1400*l*."

(Here follow accounts of several vessels lost at sea.) Among others, he says, "The Prince of Wales Packet, of Parkgate, (I came last from Ireland in her,) is lost."

"The Dublin theatre is said to have been robbed on the 22d of last month, of several articles, of *no use to any but the owners.* I have known it, when the meanest robber would have been disappointed of *any article.*

"Respecting the King of Spain's proclamation criminating his son with an atrocious intention, it is easy to discover that the plot was prepared, the parts assigned, and the catastrophe arranged, by the Corsican despot. This monster in human nature wishes to degrade all the reigning families of Europe, by making them completely contemptible. The Emperor of Russia, who was much shocked at, and who detested the atrocious and diabolical murder of the Duke D'Enghein, has the very wretch sent to him as an embassador who conducted the seizure of that unhappy prince. Indeed one murderer is the fittest to represent another. It is rather singular that the Paris papers make no mention of this Spanish plot. Perhaps it has not succeeded perfectly to the tyrant's wish.

"The carrying on the Corsican's projects has met with much assistance from the states of

Spain and Denmark, both under the dominion of two weak, imbecile mortals. The Crown Prince of Denmark, of whom much has been said, was very prudently *absent* during the bombardment of Copenhagen. Every day furnishes proof of the sagacity of our present ministry, and of their justice to their country, in demanding and seizing the Danish fleet.—Dined a little after one. Read "The Commercial Chronicle" for Tuesday last."

(Here follows an abstract of the news.)

"Wrote some time in the chronicle. Drank tea a little after five—answered Mr. Rock's last letter, though not to my own satisfaction—between tea and supper continued the chronicle. The frost has given way, and to-night it rains and blows. Supped a quarter before nine. Read in Housman. Went to bed at eleven."

"*Friday, December 4th, (5 w.)*

"Arose at ten; breakfasted; read the Cumberland Herald for Tuesday last.

"Before dinner read the 1st and 2d marked weeks—had dined by half past one—read the 3d and 4th—walked. In this country, they carry different articles much in the same paltry and lazy manner they do in Ireland; their small one-horse carts, drawn by a poor looking animal, much resemble, and are little better than, the cars used in that kingdom. There is nothing more grating to my ear than the beastly noise they make with their wooden clogs, shod with iron. I begin to think differently of my *border* friend than I could once have thought. This has been one of my disagreeable days. Listless indolence has preyed upon me—even the motions of a poor fly occupied some moments. Wrote in the chronicle, supped between eight and nine. Made two short extracts. Continued with little intermission writing in the chronicle till near midnight, and about that time went to bed."

"*Saturday*, *Dec. 5th.*

"Arose about eleven, after a good night's rest. Breakfasted: read the "Tyne Mercury," a Newcastle paper I do not recollect to have seen before.

"The Theatre Royal (Newcastle,) is advertised to open on the 15th of this month. To the advertisement is prefixed a motto from Shakspeare. This is presumption in the writer, as it supposes, that the audience of Newcastle are yet to be informed of the use and purport of a stage —Dined between one and two—the poor fly, or, *a* poor fly, again attracted my notice. Finished my chronicle for the present. It was very hastily written, and without a scrap of assistance from any book, note, or memorandum whatever.

"Drank tea about five. Read over my "Chronicle;" corrected a mistake, and made a small addition. I have given at the end, a list of the *truly eminent* actors and actresses I have seen, *now no more*, with all the characters (I can recollect,) I have seen them in. Some of them are fresh "in my mind's eye." Supped before nine: a blowing rainy night.

"I remember hearing a reverend gentleman of Newcastle, whose death I recorded last Thursday, say, that when a person, on being asked what he was thinking of, replied, nothing, he was then thinking of a multitude of things, but not any thing distinctly. I have often experienced the remark to be just, and last night was an additional proof of it. I tried to fix my thoughts, but in vain. The body will feel a distaste, sometimes approaching to disgust, at being long supplied with the same kind of food, and nothing but the craving of hunger, can enable it to endure it. The mind is much in the same state, when forced to recur over and over again to the same mental repast, particularly if scantily supplied. If I remember right, Colly Cibber said he could employ his thoughts satisfactorily, for six hours; but were those six hours to be repeated for six days successively, to the most acute and distinct thinker, (unless upon some particular or important object, instead of relaxation or amusement, I think it would rather be a painful endurance."

"*Sunday, Dec. 6th.*

"Awoke before four, and did not sleep again until near eight. Arose at half past ten; breakfasted, and dressed. Before dinner, wrote. Dined at one. I believe if I was not to appear below stairs until dinner-time, my hostess would send in both at once. Read over my "chronicle," to prevent any material mistake: made one small addition: while reading, received a letter from Mr. Betterton, at Whitehaven, with an invitation to visit him, on business, for a fortnight. Found the poor fly again, (I am almost sure it is the same,) struggling in a bason of water. I extricated the benumbed insect. The young men of the town and neighbourhood have been attending their military duties, as volunteers, which I suppose is the practice every Sunday, if the weather is not too much against them. Our clowns have acquired some degree of exterior polish, by this universal arming. I have heard some doubt their ability, if called into actual service. I was in Ireland, during the whole time of the late rebellion, and I do not remember to have heard a single instance, where the volunteer force was called into actual service, that did not redound to their honour. Supped a little before nine. I drank tea at the usual time. The day has been mild and pleasant. The moon to-night shines dimly, and is rather obscured by clouds. Sat musing until midnight, then went to bed."

"*Monday, Dec. 7th.*

"Arose at ten; breakfasted. Read the Commercial Chronicle for Thursday last.

"The Carlisle paper I read this morning, is published, I perceive, by one Mr. *T'otherside.* How ingenious they are in the metropolis, in inventing extraordinary amusements! A dog was thrown over the centre arch of Westminster-bridge in the dark, on which a wager was depending, that he would not find his master's house in six hours. The poor animal found it in two. Could his master have done it? In the midst of war, when expectation is raised high, and many have to lament its consequences, some of Joe Millar's worst jokes find their way into some of our papers of *intelligence.* Dined between one and two. Read the Commercial Chronicle of last Saturday.

"A paragraph announces me to have arrived in London. This afternoon received a letter from London, dated two months ago! on the back of it, *not to be found* in red ink. I could almost swear it to be my own writing. The place to which it is first addressed I cannot discover. A quantity of snow has just fallen.

Wrote an answer to Mr. Betterton's letter received yesterday, but when I shall dispatch it, I know not. The evening hanging very, very heavy, cast the principal characters of a few plays, as they might be done at Covent Garden. I have given as little trouble to the managers, respecting plays, the wardrobe-keeper, or the property-man, for the time I have been in the theatre, as any one in my situation that ever belonged to it. It may not be always so. Turned over the fables of Æsop, to find the "eagle and beetle," which he addressed to the enraged Delphians, when they were in the act of throwing him down the rock, but it is not in the collection. The purport of it is, "That the weakest may sometimes procure vengeance against the most powerful, when greatly injured by them." Went to bed at eleven."

"*Tuesday, Dec.* 8*th.*

"Arose at a quarter past ten; breakfasted. A comfortless winter morning; passed by the fire-side; nothing done, and little thought of. Dined at half past one. Made a short addition to the "chronicle." This afternoon disposed of, I may say got rid of, much the same as the morning. After five drank tea.

"Read the Mirror of the Times, for Saturday last."

(Here, as usual, follows an abstract of the news.)

"If the new-fangled emperor succeeds in drawing his confederates to unite against these envied islands, we shall have the maritime powers of France, Spain, Portugal, Russia, and Sweden, together with the wreck of other navies, assisted by Austria, and what is left of Prussia, with the petty upstart monarchs of Bavaria, Holland, Westphalia, and Wirtemburgh, (a goodly company,) at once to cope with. The contest will be worthy Britain!

"Nought shall make us rue,
"If England TO ITSELF, do prove but true."

"We have lived to see our immortal countryman's writing verified; and what is more singular, in the *very character* to whom he has given the words, "a man may smile, and smile, and be a villain!"—At least I'm sure he may be so in *Denmark*. There is no doubt, but the prediction of Faulconbridge, will be as truly accomplished.

"In one of the papers I looked over yesterday, it mentioned some alterations likely to take place in the ministry. Talent does not always recommend to power; although the imprudent friends of the late ministry boasted that they possessed ALL the talent in the kingdom. Of late years, it has been too much the custom to suspect any one of disloyalty, who ventured to disapprove or canvass the conduct of a minister. Discussion is fair, and ought always to be open. I think it rather a proof of loyalty to the sovereign, and friendship to the people, to point out a minister's defects and incapabilities, though at the same time convinced of the rectitude of his intentions. Every honest man does not possess knowledge and understanding sufficient to be intrusted with the conduct of the public welfare. I am not politician enough to decide, whether it is *absolutely necessary* for ministers to be *exactly* of one opinion. I fancy that in the minutiæ of affairs, it will be seldom found to prove so; but in the *grand essentials* of government, it must always be attended to. Let the opposition, for there always will be one, prove them wrong.

"Supped before nine, and went to bed at eleven."

"*Wednesday*, *Dec.* 9*th*.

"Arose a quarter after nine; breakfasted; dressed; wrote some time. Dined at one. Invited my host to drink some wine with me. Read a government paper. Some time after five drank tea. Received a visit upon business, from a pretty young lady. Looked over an act of parliament—Supped before nine. The weather clear and frosty, but pleasant. In this want of employment, and lack of books, I have by me some papers that require revision, and yet I cannot prevail upon myself to look upon them. It is true, I have an excuse, but not a good one. Idleness, says the proverb, is the root of all evil. Mine, at present, is much more compulsory than voluntary. This day I had a chance of hearing from six different persons, but the old post woman had no business with me—During the evening, felt a little indisposed.—Went to bed at eleven, not very well."

" *Thursday*, *Dec.* 10*th*.

" Awoke before two, with a severe headache, occasioned, as I suppose, by the coldness of the night, my fire having gone out. I could not sleep again until near six. Arose, at ten, better than when I went to bed.—Breakfasted; a gloomy frosty day, with snow upon the ground. Dined at one. Received a letter from Mr. Rock at Edinburgh. Read the Cumberland Packet: it contains very little but what I have read before—The letter I mean to write to Mr. Rock this evening, must be to my own satisfaction; my last was neither to his nor mine—Looked into the map of England—Passed a cold, dreary, frosty afternoon, in a day dream by the fire-side. I am afraid too much of life has been passed in the same manner—" What dreams may come, when we have shuffled off this mortal coil."—"Aye, there's the rub!"—Drank tea at five—Answered Mr. Rock's letter. Marked the characters in Richard, as they stood in 1806 and 1807—marked the first scene of the character of Macbeth. The book is of the edition with Mrs. Inchbald's *remarks.* Undoubtedly Mr. Garrick was wrong, in not dressing and decorating this play as near the ancient Scottish manner as possible; but not more so than others of his contemporaries. If Mrs. I. thought it necessary to mention the name of Garrick, it should have been in a more decent and respectful manner, than "Garrick had taste, it is said;" (the *muse*, as Mr. Kemble emphatically, and I should suppose ironically, calls her, seems to entertain a doubt of it;) "and so, they say, had his admirers: yet taste like this would be now exploded. So, it might be insinuated perhaps, would be the acting of those days, could it have been preserved along with the old attire." The first part of this *remark* is ridiculous, and the latter is impertinent. Mrs. Inchbald's *age* might have taught her more discretion, as well as good manners. If she was so unfortunate as never to have seen Mr. Garrick; I say unfortunate, for she was an actress some time before Mr. G. retired; yet she must have seen some of the school, (some are yet living,) and to call their talents in question, is confessing herself devoid of judgment. The taste and genius of Garrick will be recorded to posterity, when the names of her flimsy pages and more flimsy remarks, will be totally sunk in oblivion. The author, from whose writings the story of Macbeth is taken, is one beyond the reach of Mrs. Inchbald's understanding.

" Supped about nine. Read the Commercial Chronicle for Tuesday last.

" Spent some time after supper in writing, and in reading what I wrote. Feel a little indisposed.

" Went to bed at midnight."

" *Friday*, *Dec.* 11*th.* (6*th w.*)

" Arose a quarter before ten; breakfasted; read and wrote. Read the General Evening Post of Tuesday last.

" Dined a few minutes after one. Mine host, not " of the garter," but of the anvil, received a letter from Aberdeen, inquiring very particularly after me. I paid the postage, and shall answer the letter when convenient. Drank tea, after five. Read a Morning Advertiser of the 1st of this month. Finished marking the part of Macbeth; but shall carefully look it over again. Read the memorandums of the 5th week. Before I send an answer to the letter from Aberdeen, I must hear from Edinburgh. Supped between nine and ten; went to bed at midnight."

"*Saturday*, *Dec.* 12*th*.

"Arose about ten; breakfasted and dressed. Mine host received a letter again from Aberdeen, a counterpart of the one received yesterday, but sent by another route. The writer of both, seems impatient to be acquainted with the particulars of my being in this part of the kingdom. I first saw him at Shrewsbury, in the month of November, 1794, when on my way to Dublin, with the late Mr. William Dawson. At that time I believe he belonged to the army. In the year 1798, I saw him, and visited him in Dublin. Since, have had some letters from him, and had a short conversation with him last summer, in Edinburgh. He is now manager of the theatres, (Royal, *he* calls the first,) of Aberdeen, Dundee, and some others, and has taken the theatre Royal, Glasgow, for one year, commencing in May next.

"Dined between one and two. The day has been mild, open, and pleasant. After dinner, walked. Something indisposed with a cold. In one of the newspapers, I read this week, there is a curious recipe for the hydrophobia; by immersing the patients in a depth of cold water sufficient to *drown them*. This, no doubt, is an efficacious cure for every disease. The writer *gravely* observes, that as this is the season when persons receiving the infection in warm weather, begin to feel the horrid effects of it, that *heat* spreads infection, and *cold* deadens it; the means of recovery too from recent suspension of breath, being almost brought to a certainty, the experiment is worth the trial. To answer him as *gravely*, if cold deadens infection, and heat diffuses it, how is it that infection *received in warm weather* does not appear until the season is *cold?* In the midst of his *gravity*, our serious writer forgot, or at least overlooked, this contradiction. After five, drank tea—looked over some accounts; destroyed some. Supped about half past eight. Chatted with mine host. Looked over some late accounts. Went to bed at half past eleven."

"*Sunday*, *Dec.* 13*th*.

"Awoke before three; this is disagreeable, as it prevents rising until late; I did not sleep again till after seven. Arose at half past ten; breakfasted. Dined at one. Wrote to Mr. Howe of the King's-head Inn, for my wine account. Marked the characters of the Merchant of Venice, as it was acted at Covent Garden, 1804. I have been so fortunate as to see the late Mr. Macklin act Shylock. I think he fully merited the great reputation he gained by it; I have also seen it represented by Henderson, King, and Kemble. The first of the three the best. The exclamation of Pope, when he saw Macklin the first time in Shylock,

"This is the Jew
"That Shakspeare drew,"

was not only highly complimentary to his excellent acting of the character, but to his judicious choice of the mode of acting it, which has been followed and imitated by all his successors.

"Before Macklin revived the play, Shylock had been always (at least within memory,) acted by, what is technically termed, a *low* comedian, and consequently with all the buffoonery attendant on those performances. Mr. King, as I observed, I have seen. Mr. Yates, I have heard of, and can well believe he justly merited the applause he received; but I do not class these gentlemen with *low* comedians. Whenever they acted low comic characters, which they frequently did, they never lost sight of "and let your clowns say no more than is set down for them; for there be of them," &c.

"I have heard some comedians, contemporaries of my own, who have expressed a desire to act Shylock; and expressed an opinion that they could act it well. Happily for the feelings of the audience, and their own reputation, they never made the trial. Read over my diary of this day of December last year. Drank tea at five. I am uneasy concerning some affairs at Berwick. I have had sufficient lessons of experience to be cautious whom I trust, and perhaps may remember them—I will make no more promises. Supped some time after eight. Went to bed at half past ten. The day has been dull with rain and wind."

" *Monday*, *Dec.* 14*th.*

" Again tormented with early waking—Arose a quarter before ten; breakfasted: inspected some articles which much wanted it. After one, dined. Read the " Commercial Chronicle," of Thursday last.

" Read over some memorandums of last year, in December. The day has been mild and open. Drank tea a quarter after five, supped before nine, and went to bed at eleven."

" *Tuesday*, *Dec.* 15*th.*

" Arose at eight; dressed. Have been favoured with the first volume of " the History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland, by Joseph Nicholson, Esq. and Richard Burn, L. L. D." Received a present of a partridge from Capt. Dent of the Royal Westmoreland militia, just as I had begun to look at the history of the county. Dined at half past one—read the Mirror of the

Times for Saturday last, employed the afternoon in reading "Westmoreland," and made some notes—drank tea a little after five; read in "Westmoreland," and took more notes—Supped upon my morning present a quarter before nine; read again in "Westmoreland." I find the town of Appleby has been very considerably larger than its present extent renders apparent. If the officers of the corporation are in number, as mentioned by the historians I am quoting, almost every house must contain an officer. The corporation, as I understand the History at present, seems not to have any charter, but acts from prescription. But I shall finish at least the first volume before I venture any memorandums.—The day open and warm for the season."

"*Wednesday*, *Dec.* 16*th*.

"Arose at a quarter past nine; breakfasted—read in "Westmoreland"—dined a quarter past one—continued reading until tea time—finished looking over the volume, (a quarto,) with addenda. "An introductory discourse on the ancient state of the borders," precedes the history."

(Here follow several notes and extracts from the book, which he had been reading.)

"Supped ten minutes before nine; between tea and supper, and between supper and hal past eleven, engaged in writing extracts and memorandums—the weather continues fair and pleasant; went to bed at half past twelve."

"*Thursday, Dec.* 17*th.*

"Arose at ten; breakfasted; the morning clear, frosty, and pleasant." (Here follow notes from the History of Westmoreland.) "Read the Cumberland Packet for Tuesday last." (Among other articles of intelligence he mentions the following:)

"Madame Catalani has been prevailed upon to accept 5000 guineas, and two benefits, to sing at the Opera House, the ensuing season.—Amazing condescension! The French journalists pay a compliment, notwithstanding the war, to our immortal bard, by adopting his precept to the actors of silly characters—they say no more "than is set down for them."

The Crown Prince of Denmark continues in such a passion, that he would not suffer the English commissioners to pay the debts of the late expedition, but ordered them away at a word. His conduct, on this occasion, is similar to that of a Scotchman, I believe of the name of Mac Intosh, who a few years ago kept a genteel public house, in some one of the courts, near St. Martin's Lane. He was so scrupulously exact in the decorum of his house, that if any one spilt their liquor on the table, or insisted upon a pipe, or in any way offended him, he would vociferate "D—— your sauls, leave ma house; I'll pay the reckoning mysel."—Dined at half past one; drank tea a quarter after five. The day has been mostly occupied in writing—received a letter from Mr. Rock, at Edinburgh—by the contents of it I shall receive another to-morrow—read over the last two days' memorandums. Dr. Burn, one of the historians of Westmoreland, was vicar of Orton, in that county, a dirty village between Kendal and Appleby. He was author of a book that has run through many editions: Burn's Justice. He was also appointed to, and executed the office of, chancellor of the diocese of Carlisle.

"Supped a quarter before nine. A remarkable pleasant day for the season. Looked again into 'Westmoreland.' Went to bed at twelve."

"*Friday*, *Dec.* 18*th.* (7 *w.*)

"Arose at eight. Breakfasted before nine. Another very fine morning. Dressed. Dined at a quarter past one. Received a letter from Mr. Rock, which requires an answer by return. He has left me a choice in two circumstances, which at present are very particular.

"Wrote a letter to Aberdeen, in answer to two received from there, though not addressed to me. Drank tea between five and six. Read the memorandums of the sixth week. The particular noting every little occurrence, for the space of eight weeks, from the 6th of November, will be scattered, and negligently written upon different fragments. When the above time is expired, I shall not be so minute, but I hope more regular. Returned an answer to Mr. Rock's letter, which I hope, (never give up hope,) will turn out to the satisfaction of both. Supped before nine. The evening similar to the day. Went to bed at eleven."

"*Saturday*, *Dec.* 19*th.*

"Arose at eight; breakfasted. A clear, pleasant, frosty day. Indisposed all the morning with a disagreeable sensation in my head, and a sickly affection at my stomach. The mind partakes of the body's uneasiness. Dined between one and two; appetite small. For these ten weeks past, I have neither tasted pork, ham, bacon, poultry, fish, eggs, puddings, or game, one partridge excepted. Except my provisions being fresh, I have lived as if at sea. The bread, coals, and candles, are not good, and the wine I have drank—I wish it had been better. Tea between five and six. But that the weather was pleasant, this day would have been one of the most wearisome, tedious, and heavy, I have passed for some time. There were not any letters that demanded an answer, and, as for any other writings, my mind was entirely out of tune. Books I had not. I wished much for the second volume of the quarto I have been reading, which contains the history of Cumberland; and this morning I told thick-sculled Mulciber so, and desired him to give my compliments to the gentleman, (I know not who he is,) who lent me the first, and thank him. He promised; but market-day, and a book not being of any consequence, or its being a matter of indifference, whether it was procured on one day or the next, or whether at all, I have heard no mention of it; and it irks me to ask for any thing oftener than is necessary. After tea, therefore, travelled awhile in Sterne's flowery path, but returned again rather reluctantly to plain, dull reality.

"My indisposition was somewhat better after dinner, but has returned a little since the commencement of the evening. Looked into a paltry list of gods, goddesses, heroes, heroines, &c. Supped at a quarter before nine; sat musing, and went to bed at eleven."

"*Sunday, Dec. 20th.*

"Arose at ten; breakfasted. While at breakfast, mine host informed me, that the young lady who called upon me, on the evening of Wednesday the 9th, was this morning led to the altar. Upon inquiring who was the happy *man;* he told me a school *boy* of twenty. A cold, hoar frost, and hazy—I had observed a young man walking very thoughtfully near the river, but did not apprehend his fate so near.—I have just seen the wedded pair.

" Dined between one and two. Drank tea between five and six. Had a little conversation with mine host on business, but cannot understand him. I must apply to-morrow to another person.

" Supped at half past eight, and went, not in the best humour, to bed at eleven."

CHAP. XX.

Remarks on the last Journal—Liberation by Mr. Rock—Mr. Cooke plays at Glasgow and Edinburgh—plays in London, March 10*th*, 1808—*Colin M'Leod—Fashionable Lover — Caratach — Bonduca — Falstaff—Merry Wives of Windsor—Kent in Lear.*

I HAVE omitted a great part of his Appleby Journal, consisting of extracts from books and newspapers, and remarks on the political occurrences of the day. I fear that even yet too much may be retained, but there is a kind of near and intimate view obtained of a man, through the medium of a particular journal of even his uninteresting actions, which I think ought not to be altogether withheld from the public.

His chronicle he began on Sunday evening, Nov. 29th, and it appears to have been a principal source of amusement to him during a part of his confinement. Nothing but a circumstance of this kind could have induced such industry as he here evinced. His chronicle, which has served as my guide up to this period, was written in little more than a week. Mr. Rock's negotiation is going on, and depending upon certain expected answers to propositions made elsewhere—probably to Mr. Harris. He once mentions walking out; which proof *of his liberty*, confirms the opinion of his being in Appleby jail; for, if he had been shut up to avoid creditors, he would not have walked out; but the prisoners at Appleby have a certain space allotted them, in which they are allowed to exercise; and having no longer fear of the sheriff or his deputies, our hero might indulge himself in safety. He appears, however, to have made little use of this privilege, probably owing to the inclemency of the season.

Of the conclusion of his negotiation with Mr. Rock, the manager of the Glasgow and Edinburgh theatres, Mr. Cooke tells us nothing. He breaks off abruptly, and although he begins a journal very soon after, as we shall see, he avoids the subject altogether. However, it is well known that Rock liberated him; and, from what follows, we cannot mistake the conditions. Rock was to be repaid by our hero's playing for him a certain number of nights, which contract was, doubtless, faithfully and honourably performed.

It will be seen by the following journal, that Mr. Cooke must have attended scrupulously to his professional duties from the last of December, 1807, to the beginning of July, 1808. During this time he played in Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, Bristol, and Bath. In July he joined his old friends at Manchester, and there probably ended the salutary effect of the lesson received at Appleby.

" *Wednesday, Dec. 30th*, I acted Richard at Glasgow. I have not acted, until that night, since the 17th of August, when I performed at Berwick. My reception favourable as usual.

" *Friday, Jan. 1st*, 1808, Glenalvon and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm.

" *Monday, January, 4th*, Shylock.

" *Wednesday, 6th*, Iago.

" *Friday, 8th*, Glenalvon.

" *Saturday, 9th*, Joseph Surface.

" *Monday, 11th*, Stukely.

" *Wednesday, 13th*, The Man of the World.

" *Friday, 15th*, Oakly and Sir Archy.

" *Saturday, 16th*, Richard (for the Royal Infirmary).

" *Monday, 18th*, Macbeth.

" *Wednesday, 20th*, Peregrine.

" *Thursday, 21st*, my own night, The Provoked Husband, and Love-a-la-Mode, being the last night—Lord Townly and Sir Archy—182*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

" Left Glasgow on Friday afternoon, half past three, January, 22d, and arrived at Mac

Gregor's Hotel, Princes-street, Edinburgh, about the same time on Saturday morning."

"*Theatre Royal, Edinburgh*,

"*Saturday*, *Jan. 23d*, Shylock.

"Received in a flattering manner by a brilliant and crowded audience."

"*Sunday*, *Jan. 24th*. A little after noon, called upon Mr. and Mrs. White. Left their house and went to Mr. Rock's. Marked the book of "Every Man in his Humour." Dined alone, and staid within, alone, till midnight, when I went to bed.

"*Monday*, *25th*, Rehearsed Kitely and acted Richard.

"*Tuesday*, *26th*, Dined at Mr. White's, in company of Miss Lamb, Col. Graham, Doctor Mitchell, and Mr. Rock.

"*Wednesday*, *27th*, Rehearsed Kitely and acted Sir Pertinax.

"*Thursday*, *28th*, Zanga, *very indifferently*.

"*Friday*, *29th*, Rehearsed Kitely. Dined at Mr. White's, in company with Mr. Dubison, Mr. W. did not join us 'till the evening, as did Mr. and Mrs. Forsyth. Engaged to dine with Mr. F. on Friday next.

"*Saturday* *30th*, Oakly and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm ; dined at Mr. Rock's.

"*Sunday*, *31st*, Mr. White called on me, I had previously written a note to his house, to excuse myself from dining with him, but at his request dined with him, Mrs. White, Miss Lamb, Doctor Mitchell, and a young student in medicine from London. Drank tea, supped, and got home about eleven.

"*Monday*, *Feb.* 1*st*, Ordered home some wine; went to the stationer's, shoe-maker's, and post-office. Answered a letter received from Mr. Beaumont at Aberdeen. Rehearsed Macbeth. Called upon the Rev. Mr. Vincent: walked with him and his two sons. In the evening played Macbeth.

Tuesday, 2*d*, Rehearsed Kitely. Dined with Mr. Guthrie and a party of gentlemen.

"*Wednesday*, 3*d*, Acted Sir Pertinax.

"*Thursday*, 4*th*, Much indisposed. Did not rise until afternoon. At night acted Shylock.

Friday, 5*th*, Rehearsed Kitely. Dined at Mr. Forsyth's, in company of Mr. and Mrs. White, Miss Lamb, two Miss Jacksons, Col. M'Dowell, Major M'Quarrie, Mr. M'Lean, Mr. Dubison, Mr. Anderson, &c. At night went with Messrs. W. and D. to Corri's rooms, it being his own night. Heard Mrs. Ashe and Mr. Lees sing, and a concerto on the violin, by Master Gattie, a promising boy of eleven years of age, from London. Returned with the same gentlemen to where I dined. Played at cards, supped, and got home some time after one in the morning.

"*Saturday*, 6*th*, Visited by an old woman, to whom I gave a pound note. This evening acted Kitely. I believe I never acted it worse. The greater part of it was *caviare* to the actors, as well as the audience.

"*Sunday*, 7*th*, Dined at Mr. Murray's, on the Castle hill, in company with some gentlemen, strangers, and Mr. Rock.

"*Monday*, 8*th*, Richard.

"*Wednesday*, 10*th*, Man of the World.

"*Thursday*, 11*th*, John Bull.

"*Saturday*, 13*th*, Jaques.

"*Monday*, 15*th*, Iago, (very ill.)

"*Tuesday*, 16*th*, Glenalvon.

"*Wednesday*, 17*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"On *Friday*, 19*th*, went to Mrs. Ashe's concert, with Mr. White, after dining with a party at Dr. Mitchell's.

"*Saturday*, 20*th*, Joseph Surface—recited the Nelson Ode, and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm—My own night, 205*l*.

"*Monday*, 22*d*, Richard.

"*Wednesday*, 24*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Thursday*, 25*th*, Stukely (for the benefit of the City Charity Workhouse).

"*Saturday*, 27*th*, Shylock and Sir Archy.

"*Monday*, 29*th*, Iago, the last.

"On *Friday*, *March* 4*th*, at four in the afternoon, left Edinburgh, in the mail coach. Supped at Berwick; the next morning breakfasted at Newcastle; in the afternoon dined at Northallerton, and arrived in York between ten and eleven, where I supped and slept. The next day (Sunday) dined with Mr. and Mrs. Wrench, and a Mr. Phillips. In the evening retired to my inn, slept, and sat out the next morning at five in the High Flyer for Stamford. Breakfasted at Ferry Bridge, dined at Newark, supped at a stage between Grantham and Stamford, the village" (Woolsthorpe) " where Sir Isaac Newton was born; and reached Stamford some time before midnight, where I slept. After walking about the town, which I was once acquainted with, breakfasted, in company of Major Craigie, of the Perthshire militia; set out in a post-chaise for London. Dined at Biggleswade, and arrived in London, a little after eleven. At Barnet we took four horses, and were advised to take all our baggage inside. Drove to Old Slaughter's Coffee-house; no room there, nor at the New. Then to an Hotel, near the top of the Haymarket; the same there—and at last to a foreign Hotel, the east corner of Leicester-Square, where we supped and slept. In the morning of Wednesday, 9th, parted with the Major, but remained at the house until Saturday, 12th, when I removed to a lodging at No. 25, James-Street, Covent Garden. On Thursday the 10th, I made my re-appearance at the Theatre Royal Covent

Garden, in Sir Pertinax, to the greatest money-house, one excepted, ever known in the theatre. Never was a performer received in a more gratifying or flattering manner.

" *Saturday*, 12*th*, Shylock.

" *Monday*, 14*th*, Richard.

" *Thursday*, 17*th*, Sir Pertinax.

" *Saturday*, 19*th*, Shylock and Sir Archy.

" *Monday*, 21*st*, Richard.

" *Thursday*, 24*th*, Sir Pertinax.

" *Saturday*, 26*th*, Shylock and Sir Archy.

" *Monday*, 28*th*, Iago.

" *Thursday*, 31*st*, Sir Pertinax.

" *Saturday*, *April* 2*d*, Shylock. This evening died, of a paralytic stroke, Mr. John Ledger, of T. R. C. G.

" *Monday*, 4*th*, Iago.

" *Tuesday*, 5*th*, Kitely.

" *Thursday*, 7*th*, Sir Pertinax.

" *Saturday*, 9*th*, Colin M'Leod, (1st time,) for the benefit of Mr. Lewis.

" *Monday*, 18*th*, (Easter Monday,) Richard.

" *Wednesday*, 20*th*, Sir Pertinax.

" *Friday*, 22*d*, Shylock. This evening, between five and six, died Mr. Thomas Hull.

" *Saturday*, 23*rd*, Sir Pertinax, in a new theatre at Gravesend, for Mrs. Litchfield's benefit, having promised her.

" *Monday*, 25*th*, Richard.

" *Wednesday*, 27*th*, Falstaff, (Merry Wives.)

"*Thursday*, 28*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Saturday*, 30*th*, Shylock and Sir Archy.

"*Tuesday*, *May* 3*d*, Caratach, 1st time, with Garrick's prologue, my own night.

"*Wednesday*, 4*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Thursday*, 5*th*, Caratach, (with prologue.)

"*Saturday*, 7*th*, Colin M'Leod.

"*Tuesday*, 10*th*, Falstaff, (Merry Wives.)

"*Wednesday*, 11*th*, Sir Archy.

"*Thursday*, 12*th*, Falstaff, (Henry 4. 1 p.)

"*Saturday*, 14*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Monday*, 16*th*, Richard.

"*Wednesday*, 18*th*, Kent, (1st time.)

"*Friday*, 20*th*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Saturday*, 21*st*, Sir Archy.

"*Monday*, 23*d*, Kent.

"*Tuesday*, 24*th*, Col. Vortex, (new com.)

"*Thursday*, 26*th*, Kent.

"*Saturday*, 28*th*, Sir Archy.

"*Monday* 30*th*, Kent.

"*Wednesday*, *June* 1*st*, Clytus.

"*Thursday*, 2*d*, Sir Christopher Curry.

"*Friday*, 3*d*, Sir Pertinax.

"*Monday*, 6*th*, Kent.

"*Tuesday*, 7*th*, Don Felix and Jubilee Ode.

"*Wednesday*, 8*th*, Richard."

It appears from the preceding statement, that Cooke, during this short period, performed Sir Pertinax eleven times, Richard six times, and Shylock as many.

Mr. Rock gained great credit with his Scotch friends, for treating them with Cooke's acting at such an unusual season of the year, when the winter theatres were open in London, and of course they could expect none but provincial actors. "The liberal manner," says a Glasgow writer in the Monthly Mirror, "in which Mr. Rock extricated Mr. Cooke from the fangs of *John Doe* and *Richard Roe*, reflects no less honour on his feelings as a man, than on his judgment as a manager." Two causes are not necessary to produce the effect above alluded to. Mr. Rock's judgment as a manager is quite sufficient.

At Edinburgh, Mr. Young, who now holds so conspicuous a station among the tragedians of the English metropolis, played with our hero in most of the pieces which afforded scope to his admirable talents. Mr. Cooke took the "School for Scandal" for his benefit, and played Joseph. He recited an ode to the memory of Lord Nelson, and then played Sir Archy.

Mr. Cooke's return to his station at Covent Garden was a cause of congratulation to the lovers of the drama. He was not only greeted with welcomes at the theatre, but the presses announced his return with equal cordiality. Says the Mirror, "Mr. Cooke returned from his *travels*, made his first appearance this season in Macklin's *Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant*, The many rumours of his sufferance by spirits, and by bailiffs, of "*disastrous chances, of moving accidents by flood—of hair-breadth escapes—of being taken by the insolent foe—And——redemption thence,*" seemed to have such an effect on the audience, that they appeared the *more to love* him *for the dangers* he *had passed*, and with not three, but six rounds of applause, greeted his return. Such a house has not been seen since the *little hour* of *little Betty*. "Of Mr. Cooke's imprudence, until *we* again suffer by it, we shall say no more. As it respects himself, it carries its own punishment with it. Viewing him on all sides—his pitiable weaknesses, and his vast merits, we are tempted to exclaim, with Chesterfield of Lord Bolingbroke—"*What can we say, but, alas! poor human nature!*"

Some of the "witty rogues say, that Rock, by releasing Cooke from durance vile, proved "that he was not made of stone." It was rather hard upon poor Cooke to be pelted with such jokes on his arrival.

It was stated, at this time, that Mr. Thomas Sheridan offered Mr. Harris a premium to allow him to take Cooke out of *durance*, to play a certain number of nights at Drury Lane. This Mr. Harris prudently refused, as he knew, full well, that absence would enhance his value, and that when he should be released, he must come back to him.

It will be seen by the last journal, that on his return, Mr. Cooke played his great characters in rapid succession. It was remarked at the time that the cast of "Richard the Third," was peculiarly weak; actors of secondary talents appearing to have been kept out of the bill by Mr. Kemble's management, and Richard's support left to those of still inferior standing.

On a similar occasion, in 1806, a writer asks, "Is this tragedy so miserably attended to in the cast, because Mr. Cooke plays Richard?" Well, be it so. "The *king's name* is a tower of strength which they *upon the adverse faction* want."

On the 9th of April, 1808, our hero played *Colin M'Leod*, in Mr. Cumberland's *Fashionable Lover*, for the benefit of Mr. Lewis. That he would act it well cannot be doubted; and indeed it appears that Mr. Lewis, on this occasion, relied principally upon the novelty of exhibiting Cooke as an honest, frank, and benevolent Scotchman.

Mr. Cumberland tells us, that, in his opinion, *The Fashionable Lover* is a better comedy than *The West Indian;* it is not generally thought so, and on this occasion, I am willing to rank among the vulgar. It is more moral than the first-named play, and so, probably, are all his subsequent productions; but they are likewise more dull. The morality of a comedy is useless, unless there is wit enough to induce mankind to attend its representation, or to make it a travelling, or closet companion. Lessons of morality, when conveyed in the lighter kinds of literary composition, come doubly welcome to all; and are attended to by some, who would otherwise avoid them, as irksome intrusions upon their ease or pleasures. Inestimable are such authors as impress the most useful rules for the conduct of life, and add, at the same moment, to its cheerfulness and gaiety; they convey serious instruction to that immense mass, whose aim is to fly from wisdom, and who want the lesson they thus receive, just in proportion to the efforts they make to avoid it.

Mr. Cumberland's attempts to combat the prejudices of his countrymen, against Jews and Scotchmen, are certainly laudable; how far they have been successful, I am perhaps a very inadequate judge. The Scotch certainly prefer the representation of Sir Archy and Sir Pertinax, to that of Colin M'Leod, and some wags have insinuated, that the Jews consider Sheva as a satire.

It is very evident, that when Mr. Cumberland drew his benevolent Scot, he had not got above the vulgar prejudices entertained in England against Jews, and had never thought of a benevolent Israelite; for he makes Colin say, "When a man borrows money of a Jew, the suspicion is fair, that he can find no Christian to lend him any."

Mr. Cooke is said to have been particularly fine in his representation of Colin, when he places Miss Aubrey under the protection of a procuress, because he relies upon the honour and purity of "ain o'the noble blude o'the M'Leods."

At this time, I find another bit of journalizing, as follows:

"26, *James-street, Covent Garden.*

"*Easter Sunday, April* 17*th*, 1808. Arose at seven—This day completed my 52d year, being born on Saturday, April the 17th, 1756. Read five newspapers of the day, and looked into Massinger's Works, particularly "The City Madam," the characters of which I copied a list of. Mrs. Rock breakfasted, dined, and drank tea with me.—Went to bed at midnight."

"*Monday* 18*th*. Arose at seven. Before dinner, walked in St. James's Park. Received a letter from Mr. M'Cready, at Manchester. Read in a volume of the Annual Register, for

1778. In the evening acted Richard III.; very hoarse in a part of the 4th and 5th acts, but a little recovered before the conclusion. Retired after midnight."

"*Tuesday*, 19*th*. Arose before nine. Delivered Massinger's Works to Mr. Craig, a bookbinder, to bind according to direction. Read over the part of Caratach—In the evening read a part of my Westmoreland journal, and retired at midnight."

"*Wednesday*, 20*th*. Arose a quarter before nine—Looked into the first and second folio, and Theobald's, editions of Shakspeare, for what I did not find—Looked over some old writings in the reigns of Charles II. James II. and Queen Anne—Also some old advertisements of plays. In the evening acted Sir Pertinax—After supper, read "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," said to be written by Shakspeare, and now revised by J. P. Kemble—Retired to bed between twelve and one."

"*Thursday*, 21*st*. Arose between eight and nine. At the theatre, read over the part of Caratach. Wrote to Mr. Foster, Pentonville. In the evening went to Covent Garden theatre, to see "The Two Gentlemen of Verona."—The play was, in theatrical phrase, well got up, and well acted; but dull, and without much interest. Went to rest between twelve and one."

" *Friday*, 22*d.* Arose before nine. At the theatre, read some part of Falstaff, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and the part of Caratach in "Bonduca." Dined at the Wrekin.—In the evening played Shylock. Between five and six, died, Mr. Thomas Hull, upwards of forty years a worthy member of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, the planner and father of the theatrical fund.—He was in the 80th or 81st year of his age.—Retired to bed a quarter before one."

" *Saturday*, 23*d.* Arose at six."

On the 25th of April, Mr. Cooke's friends thought he was rather gay and agreeable in *Richard*, but they did not catch him tripping. This was stated as his first misdemeanor this season.

On the 3d of May, Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy of "Bonduca," was revived for the benefit of Mr. Cooke, he playing Caratach.

As this is a play of the good old school, I will give a brief sketch of its fable.

Bonduca, queen of the Iceni, and leader of the armies of Britain, enters with her attendants, her daughters, a British chieftain, called *Nennius*, and a boy, *Hengo*, nephew to Caratach. She exultingly speaks of a battle in which the Romans had been worsted, and brands them as effeminate cowards. *Caratach*, the hero, enters during this speech, and reproves the Queen for depreciating the enemy she had beaten, and thereby lessening her own glory. He praises the Romans as brave soldiers, and brings his scars to witness for their prowess. He reminds the Queen of the flight of herself, and her Britons before this despised enemy; and relates the difficulty with which he had saved young Hengo, when pursued by their valiant foes.

The hero is introduced, without the trick of expectation—raising drum or trumpet. We are not prepared by previous scenes for his reception. He is left to prove himself the hero of the play, by the words he shall utter; and that, with the old English dramatists, was enough. Bonduca ends her exulting speech with

> " A woman beat 'em.——A weak woman!
> " A woman beat these Romans."

And the first words of Caratach are,

> " So it seems.
> " A man would shame to talk so."

When peace with the Romans is talked of, Caratach opposes it in a speech, immediately applicable to the situation of England with respect to France, at the time of the play's revival.

In answer to the question of *Nennius*, " Is not peace the end of arms?" he answers,

"Not where the cause implies a general conquest:
Had we a difference with some petty Isle,
Or with our neighbours, Lady, for our land-marks,
The taking in of some rebellious Lord,
Or making head against commotions,
After a day of blood, Peace might be argued:
But where we grapple for the ground we live on,
The liberty we hold as dear as life,
The gods we worship, and, next those, our honours;
And with those swords that know no end of battle;
Those men, beside themselves, allow no neighbour;
Those minds, that where the day is, claim inheritance,
And where the sun makes ripe the fruits, their harvest:
And where they march, but measure out more ground
To add to Rome."——"It must not be."
"Let's use the peace of honour; that's fair dealing,—
But in our hands, our swords."

The reader will see the resemblance to Rolla's speech, in this. Mr. Sheridan, by comparing the Spaniards and Peruvians to the French and English, had anticipated the reviver of Bonduca. Caratach's description of himself bearing off the boy Hengo from the pursuit of the enemy, again reminds us of Rolla.

"——in the head of all the Romans' fury
Took him, and, with my tough belt, to my back
I buckled him; behind him, my sure shield.
———If I say I fought
Five times, in bringing off this bud of Britain,
I lie not, Nennius."

The second scene of the first act makes us acquainted with Suetonius, the Roman leader, and his officers, who are preparing for further contest. Junius, a young officer, is in love with a daughter of Bonduca, and his friend Petillius rallies him on his disease. A kind of Romeo and Mercutio.

In act the second, we are introduced to another part of the Roman army, and Penius, an old leader, whose command is taken from him by the recent arrival of Suetonius, refuses obedience to the orders of the latter. We have then a scene between the lover and his tormenting friend; and next in the camp of the "Britons," some Roman soldiers, who had been foraging to satisfy hunger, are brought captive. Nennius and the daughters of Bonduca doom them to death with torture, but Caratach rescues them, and gives them food. The daughters retire, but overhear a soldier speak of the love of Junius to the youngest of them, who tells her sister, that that love shall cost the Romans their lives. Caratach dismisses the soldiers to their camp with a guide, and the second daughter gives to one of them a letter for Junius.

We are then carried to the Roman camp, and Suetonius is informed that Penius refuses obedience. The following speech of the messenger is in the true style of poetic excellence:

"The regiment was willing, and advanced too,
The Captains at all points steeled up; their preparations
Full of resolve and confidence: youth and fire,
Like the fair breaking of a glorious day,
Gilded their phalanx: when the angry Penius
Stept like a stormy cloud 'twixt them and Hopes!"

Suetonius resolves to fight without Penius. The feasted soldiers return, and deliver the letter of Bonduca's second daughter, intended for Junius, to their captain Decius.

The third act commences with the *Britons* offering sacrifices in the Druidical temple—Bonduca, Nennius, the daughters, and Caratach. The reader is here reminded of the Peruvians in the Temple of the Sun. But our old English bards as far surpass Kotzebue and Sheridan, as the latter do Reynolds and Cobb. The altar is prepared, and the signal of propitious answer from the gods, as in the Peruvian scene, is fire to consume the offering. After singing and strewing flowers, Bonduca begins the invocation.

"Ye powerful gods of Britain, hear our prayers!
Hear us, you great Revengers! And this day
Take pity from our swords, doubt from our valour;
Double the sad remembrance of our wrongs
In every breast! The vengeance due to them
Make infinite and endless: On our pikes
This day, pale Terror, sit! Horrors and ruins
Upon our executions!"

No assenting sign answers the Queen. *Nennius* then,

> " Thou great *Tiranes,* whom our sacred priests,
> Armed with dreadful thunder, place on high
> Above the rest of the immortal gods,
> Send thy consuming fires, and deadly bolts,
> And shoot 'em home ; stick in each *Roman* heart
> A fear fit for confusion, blast their spirits,
> Dwell in 'em to destruction ; through their phalanx
> Strike as thou strik'st a proud tree ; shake their bodies,
> Make their strength totter, and their topless fortunes
> Unroot, and reel to ruin."

The gods are yet unmoved ! Beautifully poetic as this address is, the just gods are deaf to it. But now one of the daughters of Bonduca approaches the altar. One of those injured females who had been dishonoured by the proud conqueror, who in his madness trampled on human rights, and scoffed at human sufferings.

> " O thou God !"

says the first daughter,

> " Thou feared God, if ever to thy justice
> Insulting wrongs, and ravishments of women,
> (Women deriv'd from thee,) the shames, the sufferings
> Of those that daily fill'd thy sacrifice
> With virgin incense, have access, now hear me ;
> Now snatch thy thunder up, now on these Romans,
> Despisers of thy power, of us defacers,
> Revenge thyself ;" &c.

The signal is still expected in vain. When the beautiful Bonvica thus invokes the compassion of the Deities of her country.

"See, Heaven!
And all you Powers that guide us, see, and shame,
We kneel so long for pity. Over your altars
(Since 'tis no new oblation that you look for,
No incense offering,) will I hang mine eyes;
And as I wear these stones with hourly weeping,
So will I melt your powers into compassion.
This tear for *Prosutagus*, my brave father;
(Ye gods, now think on *Rome*,) *this*, for my mother,
And all her miseries; yet see, and save us;—
But now ye must be open-eyed! See Heaven!
Oh, see thy showers stolen from thee; our dishonours!
Oh, sister! Our dishonours! Can ye be gods,
And these sins smothered?"

The gods are moved by this heart-rending petition. The assenting flame does not yet burst forth, but smoke issues from the altar.

Caratach the hero now claims attention.

"Cease your fearful prayers,
Your whinings and your tame petitions;
The gods love courage, arm'd with confidence,
And prayers fit to pull them down: weak tears,
And troubled hearts, the dull twins of cold spirits,
They sit and smile at. Hear how I salute 'em:
Divine *Andrasta*, thou who hold'st the reins
Of furious battles, and disordered war,
And proudly roll'st thy swarty chariot wheels
Over the heaps of wounded carcasses!
Sailing thro' seas of blood! Thou sure-steel'd sternness!

Give us this day good hearts, good enemies,
Good blows o'both sides; wounds, that fear or flight,
Can claim no share in; steel us both with angers
And warlike executions fit thy viewing;
Let Rome put on her best strength, and thy Britain,
Thy little Britain, but as great in fortune,
Meet her as strong as she, as proud, as daring;
And then look on, thou red-ey'd god: *who does the best*
Reward with honour; who despair makes fly,
Unarm for ever, and brand with infamy;
Grant this, divine *Andrasta, 'tis but justice;*
And my first blow thus on thy holy altar,
I sacrifice to thee."

This is an appeal to move men or gods, and the sign is given. The altar flames They go to battle.

When the gods are called upon to revenge the wrongs done by mortal to mortal, they are silent. When they are called upon to destroy a national enemy, they are silent. When they are called upon to avenge insults offered to those peculiarly devoted to their service, they are silent. When they are called upon by a child to compassionate the sufferings of her father and mother, they are moved. But when they are requested to look on and impartially reward "who does best," they manifest their assent, and admit the justice of the appeal. If this scene is not among the finest specimens of dramatic poetry, as well as sound morality, I am in a very great error.

In the next scene, Junius the lover shows a letter to Curius and Decius, by which *Bonvica* invites him and a chosen band to carry her off from the *Britons*, and these officers agree to aid him. The battle commences: and here I find Kotzebue, and his *Spaniards in Peru*, again. When I see Penius and Drusus overlooking and describing the battle, from an eminence, I cannot but think of the old Peruvian, and the boy mounted in a tree.

In the mean time the stratagem of the injured daughters succeeds, and the Roman lover and his associates are taken prisoners. Caratach releases them. A hasty and ill-judged order of the Queen, loses the battle to the Britains, and Caratach has no help for it but to *scold her roundly*.

The fourth act begins with the Romans; and Suetonius, anxious to soothe Penius, and reconcile him to himself, under the chagrin arising from having refused his aid in the last battle, sends Petillius to him. We learn that the Queen has taken refuge in a fortress, and that Caratach is pursued by the Roman scouts. In the next scene we see Caratach and the boy Hengo dogged by Roman soldiers, who are beaten by the valour of the hero, and the courage of the boy. We are next shown the repentant Penius. Petillius enters, and wilfully increases his chagrin and despair, becoming rather more an Iago than a Mercutio, and at length Penius is wrought up to committing suicide. The last scene of the 4th act shows the Romans besieging a fortress; above are seen Bonduca and her daughters. A breach being made, and no hope of resistance, the Queen and her daughters take poison, and die exulting over their enemies.

In act the fifth, we find Caratach and Hengo upon a rock, which is their place of refuge, the Romans bearing the corse of Penius; and Caratach from the rock stops them, and laments the death of that captain. We then return to the Roman camp, and find Petillius a lover, and Junius his mocker. To add to the extravagance, Petillius is in love with the eldest daughter of Bonduca, whom he saw die by poison, and is in love with her for killing herself!! A soldier announces the situation of Caratach, and order is given to surround the rock, and take him. Petillius, Junius, and others, go on this service. Petillius, disappointed of promotion, and in love with a dead woman, endeavours to persuade Junius to kill him, but soon changes his mind again. Caratach and Hengo are again seen on the rock, and the Romans, to allure them from their lurking-place, display food in their sight. The famishing boy prevails on his uncle to lower him down, by means of a belt, that he may reach the food. During the experiment, the soldier shoots the boy, and is killed by Caratach. Surrounded by the Roman army, Caratach is prevailed upon by them to surrender himself and become the friend of Rome. In this lame and unprofitable manner ends a play, the beginning of which promised so much.

Such is Beaumont and Fletcher's play, The play, with alterations "to accommodate it to the modern stage," has some judicious transpositions of scenes, and the obvious necessity of omitting the indelicacies which disgrace nearly all the old dramatic writers, has been attended to. But the alterer, like some other alterers we know, to "accommodate" the play "to the modern stage," (meaning, I suppose, to bring it down to a level therewith,) has omitted the most beautiful passages of the author.

For example, by omitting the following words,

> "Youth and fire, like the fair breaking of a glorious day,
> Gilded their phalanx."

That beautifully poetic speech of the messenger before quoted, is accommodated to the modern stage, by making nonsense of it. And in the scene of the temple, which I have given and commented on, two chorusses are added, of no worth, and, as if with the most ingenious diligence, the highly artificial construction of the original scene is lost, and the most beautifully characteristic passages of the invocations omitted—" to accommodate them to the modern stage." The speech of Caratach is indeed retained, though mangled; but the alterer, by curtailing and fitting the preceding speeches to his modern ideas of the stage, deprives even what he has left of Caratach, of that force which the preparatory matter gave it.

I have somewhere seen this alteration attributed to George Colman. I am not willing to believe it. The transpositions of scenes show dramatic knowledge; but the play is, on the whole, made incomparably worse than it is in its original state. That it should fail is not to be wondered at; the only wonder is, that Mr. Cooke should have used his influence in the theatre to get it up. But the desire to produce attractive novelty for a benefit night, often occasions much worse exhibitions, even at the London theatres, than even the altered Bonduca.

The Merry Wives of Windsor, on the 10th of May, was performed at Covent Garden theatre, and Mr. Cooke played the second, in point of merit, of Shakspeare's Falstaffs. This comedy is said to have been produced by a wish of Queen Elizabeth's, to see the fat knight in love; and to have been written in a fortnight. Whether written in two weeks, or two years, it is an effort of genius worthy of its great author;

though certainly it will not rank with his happiest efforts. As to *love*, Sir John shows no symptoms of that passion; and perhaps the poet meant to show the Queen, that such a character could *not* feel love.

The Falstaff of the "Merry Wives of Windsor," when compared to that mass of folly, fun, vice, and wit, which delights us so much, and so incessantly, in the "First Part of Henry the Fourth," proves inferior in all the great qualifications which *make Falstaff*. He is still Falstaff, but he is not in such happy circumstances for the display of his character; here, instead of making those around him the butts of his humour and raillery, he is himself the butt; and instead of laughing with, we laugh at him. It is true that he stands a mark not easily missed for the shafts of the merry Prince of Wales, in the first play, but his wit brings him off with honour from every contest, however much it may appear to be against him for a time. Though the cause of wit in others, he is still more witty himself. Though he sinks under the humourous machinations of his companions, it is only to rise triumphant in impudence, lying, and humour. But when he falls into the snares of the two women, even Sir John has no resource. Even the genius of Shakspeare cannot extricate him.

Where the character is comparatively worse, the actor must appear comparatively worse.

It is therefore needless to say, that Mr. Cooke did not add by this second Falstaff to the fame he had gained in the first.

The tragedy of "Lear" was played for the benefit of Mr. Charles Kemble, on the 18th of May, and Mr. Cooke played *Kent* for the first time. Lear by Mr. Kemble, and Edgar by Mr. C. Kemble.

What there is of *Kent* is good; and I doubt not that Cooke stood on equal ground with his rival in the early part of the play; but Kent soon ceases to be thought of, and the sufferings of the monarch and the father occupy the attention of the audience exclusively.

On the 24th of May, our hero was exhibited in a new comedy, called "Match-making, or It's a wise Child that knows its own Father," for the benefit of Mrs. C. Kemble. The character he played was Col. Vortex. As I believe the play was neither repeated nor printed, further notice of it will not be expected here.

It will be seen by the preceding list given by himself that he played for various benefits about this time, *Clytus*, *Sir Christopher Currie*, and *Don Felix*, besides his old parts. Of his Clytus I shall hereafter speak; of the others, as I can only form an opinion of his playing them by my knowledge of the plays and the player, without having seen them united, I shall decline saying any thing.

CHAP. XXI.

Mr. Cooke's Summer Excursion in 1808—*Covent Garden Theatre burnt—Company Play in the Opera-House—Mr. Cooke's Marriage, and Return to London—Plays Pierre—Journal of January*, 1809.

THE last time Mr. Cooke played in the season 1807—8, was Wednesday the 8th of June; and on Friday the 10th he left London for his summer tour. Of this summer to the 4th of July I find the following account.

" On Friday the 10th I set out for Bath. Mr. Lockie accompanied me to Hounslow. After travelling all night, I arrived at the Lamb Inn, and that night acted Sir Pertinax. I mean on Saturday the 11th.

" *Monday*, 13*th*, Shylock and Sir Archy.

" *Wednesday*, 15*th*, Went to Bristol, accompanied by Mr. Dimond, and acted Sir Pertinax; returned to Bath after the play—much indisposed some days past, but never acted better.

" *Thursday*, 16*th*, Richard.

" *Saturday*, 18*th*, Sir Giles Over-reach.

" On *Monday*, 20*th*, at the Theatre Royal Bristol, Shylock and Sir Archy.

" *Wednesday*, 22*d*, Richard.

"*Friday*, 24*th*, Sir Giles Over-reach.

"On *Saturday*, 25*th*, at the Theatre Royal Bath, Iago and Sir Archy.

"On *Friday*, *July* 1*st*, at the Theatre Royal Manchester, Richard.

"*Monday*, 4*th*,"——

Here he abruptly breaks off. He was this summer at Newcastle and Liverpool.

During our hero's absence, Covent Garden theatre was opened, and after four nights of exhibition, burnt to the ground.

The last dramas represented in this theatre were "Pizarro" and "The Portrait of Cervantes," on the evening of the 19th of September, 1808; and the performances were over about eleven o'clock. About twelve, Mr. Brandon in the execution of his duty, went through the house, and finding every thing apparently safe, went to bed. About four the building was in flames, and by eight o'clock the whole interior of this immense edifice was consumed. The loss to the proprietors was estimated at 150,000*l*. sterling. But the most lamentable circumstances attending the conflagration was the death of about thirty firemen, who were overwhelmed by the fall of a part of the ruin.

The Covent Garden company commenced acting at the Opera-House on the 26th of

September, and on the 13th of October, 1808, Mr. Cooke made his first appearance in London for the season in Sir Pertinax, and was received by the audience with the usual marks of their particular favour.

About this time Mr. Cooke's second marriage was announced. The reader will recollect, perhaps, his notice of being frequently in company with Miss Lamb, at Edinburgh, in Jan. 1808. This lady appears to have now arrived in London as Mrs. Cooke. She was from Newark, where her family continued to reside, and we may judge by the intercourse carried on by letter and presents, as will appear hereafter, that the marriage was agreeable to all parties concerned.

The 5th of Dec. 1808, the Covent Garden company removed from the Opera-House, and commenced playing in the little theatre, Haymarket. Here Cooke was on the ground he first trod as a player in London. In this theatre he first met a London audience in 1778.

On the twenty-third, Mr. Cooke performed *Pierre*, in the tragedy of "Venice Preserved." That he performed this bold, and determined conspirator, in the style of a master, none will doubt. On the morning of the twenty-fifth, Mr. Cooke received a violent contusion in an accidental fall, which confined him to his chamber for upwards of a fortnight.

On the twenty-sixth, "Venice Preserved" being repeated, Mr. Pope played *Pierre*, and Cooke's wondrous witty friend, in the "Monthly Mirror," who had amused *himself* with some delicate and delectable puns upon *Lamb* and *Cooke*, now tells us, that "the *Pope* is better than the *pretender;*" and by his mode of his statement of facts, would lead the reader to think that Mr. Cooke had failed in the part of Pierre, and that Mr. Pope, a second-rate actor, had been substituted as a preferable representative.

That arts were used at this time, and indeed long before, to sink Cook in public estimation, there can be little doubt; and his imprudence but too well seconded the efforts of his enemies.

Not only were his criminal outrages against decorum, by appearing before the public in a state of intoxication, noted and commented upon with glee, and abortive attempts at wit; but, when the public expressed their admiration of his talents, and greeted him with thundering plaudits, warm from the heart, and the just rewards of his well-doing, these same writers branded the act as an encouragement of improvidence, and the reward of intemperance.

To the accident I have mentioned above, we owe another journal. It begins the year eighteen hundred and nine, and is continued steadily for a month.

" *Sunday*, *January* 1*st*, 1809.

" Kept at home from the morning of Christmas day, by an injury received from a fall—attended by Mr. Hunt, apothecary, and afterwards by Mr. Wilson, surgeon, of Windmill-street. Yesterday, the last of 1808, the first stone of the new Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, was laid by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Grand Master of England, attended by the officers of the Grand Lodge, and deputations from various other lodges. Arose early in the afternoon of this day.—Dined with Mrs. Cooke; had a call from Mr. John Brandon and two of his sons—wrote to Mr. Lamb, of Newark. Went to bed fatigued and in much pain."

" *Monday*, *Jan.* 2*d*.

" Arose in the afternoon. Wrote to Mr. Foote, of Plymouth, in answer to a letter received from him a few days ago.—Visited upon business, by Messrs. Glassington and John Brandon. Passed the evening in a restless, painful situation, and went to bed much in the same way."

" *Tuesday*, *Jan.* 3*d*.

" Again arose in the afternoon, in rather a better state than when I went to bed—I have been daily visited, and once in the evening, by Mr. Wilson, since Friday last, upon whose skill I have great reliance—Thoughts desultory; some pain, inertness, and languor, accompanied me to bed, where I passed rather a sleepless night."

" *Wednesday*, *Jan.* 4*th.*

" Arose before noon: intended to do many things I did not. Something better than yesterday, but still indisposed. After dinner gave way to sleep—The evening dull and heavy. Received a letter from Mr. Wrench, of Hull—Retired to bed still indisposed."

" *Thursday*, *Jan.* 5*th.*

" After a visit from Mr. Wilson, arose; and, as ordered, walked out. The consequence of my fall troubles me. Perceived by my newspaper, Othello, intended for Saturday next, is deferred, on account of my continued indisposition. Wrote to Messrs. Meyler and Son, booksellers, Bath—Received a note from a Mr. Cromek, informing me that a work I subscribed two guineas for, at Liverpool, above two years ago, and which I had entirely forgotten, is published, and requesting my address, that my copy might be sent. Another message from the theatre, to know if I could act on Thursday next. Answered, I could not tell."

"*Friday, Jan. 6th.*

"Epiphany, or twelfth night.—Wrote an answer to Mr. Cromek's note, as also a letter to Miss Jackson, of Edinburgh, in answer to one from her, dated the 17th of December last.—Received a two-penny letter from a Mr. Prior, advertising me of the loss of a *55l.* note of hand, due from me on the third of this month. I must consider better than I have done in these matters, ere I pay or renew it.

"This is the thirteenth day that I have never stirred from my apartment. My wife has not been once abroad, and time has passed very heavily on my hands.* I have read nothing except the daily news; some travels in Africa of Park, Vaillant, &c., a short tour in Scotland, given me by the author, whom I travelled with two summers ago, from Leicester to Glasgow, the reverend Mr. Keath, one of the masters of Rugby school, in Warwickshire, and the first volume of Britton Brayley's "Beauties of England and Wales," which I had, injudiciously, neatly bound some time ago, having many loose numbers by me.—Mr. Glassington called from Mr. Harris—I gave a reluctant assent to act on Thursday next, but for the present declined Friday. Received a letter from Messrs. Meyler and Son at Bath, informing me of two blanks drawn in the last lottery."

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* I think he must have intended to write *her* instead of *my*.

" *Saturday, Jan. 7th.*

" Arose at six, after nearly a sleepless, though not quite a restless night. Read in the first vol. of the Beauties, &c. Several of the towns, villages, &c., I am not quite a stranger to. Visited by Mr. Wilson for the last time, at present, as my surgeon. Dressed, intending to go out, but the wetness of the day prevented me. After dinner slept upon a sofa about three hours; a balance against my early rising. Received a letter from Mr. Lamb, and two newspapers, (I ordered one,) from Messrs. Meyler at Bath. After supper read some poems."

" *Sunday, Jan. 8th.*

" Arose after breakfast: found Mr. Brandon and Mr. Glassington, both messengers from Mr. Harris, who wishes me to act on Thursday, Friday, and Monday next: so much for my unforeseen absence—Promised as much as I could—The receipts have been very bad: whether they will much mend, is with me a doubt. Wrote to Mr. Lamb. A poor old woman, begging in the street, attracted my notice. I rung the bell, resolved to send her a shilling, but ere the servant appeared, changed my mind to sixpence.—During the evening, made out a list of the characters I have acted, (not all,) and some I mean to act; also a list of plays I want. Before and after supper, read Murphy's "Orphan of China." I saw it acted at Covent Garden above thirty years ago—Zamti and Mandane, by Mr. Ross, and (then) Mrs. Barry—It is a play that does not keep possession of the stage —There are many passages which would apply to what is passing on the great stage of the world at the present time. Murphy has not long been dead."

"*Monday, Jan. 9th.*

"Wrote before breakfast. Made out a list of plays wanted, and nine characters not acted at Bath, and the same number at Edinburgh. Read over the part of Horatius in "The Roman Father," and afterwards part of the play of "Wit without Money," altered from Beaumont and Fletcher. Some time since, Mr. Smith, of St. Edmund's Bury, formerly of Covent Garden and Drury Lane theatres, in a letter, advised me to look over the part of Valentine, which he had gained some approbation in—at that time I read the play with attention, and held it not fit for representation in the present state of the stage. This opinion was confirmed by Mr.

Smith in a subsequent note. I remember him well; his talent chiefly lay in accomplished gentlemen. He is still living, approaching his eightieth year, much respected and esteemed."

" *Tuesday*, *January* 10*th*.

" Indisposed, and in bed all day—while up at night finished reading " Wit without Money." The first time I read the comedy, I did not entertain so good an opinion of it as at present, but am still of the same opinion, that it would not succeed in the present æra of the stage. The taste for good writing is vitiated; a very small part of theatrical audiences can relish or appreciate the writings of those to whom the stage owes its present establishment. The general veneration for Shakspeare is a nominal one—his faults are by the million esteemed, and his beauties little understood. In altering the works of our old dramatic writers, there are various reasons to be assigned why they are so inaccurate—the chief, I think, is, the incapability of the alterers (I had almost written *manglers*). In the play above-mentioned there are several passages darkened and obscured, and some utterly void of common sense."

" *Wednesday*, *Jan.* 11*th*.

" From want of rest, and from indisposition, did not arise from bed until after nine at night

—wrote down some accounts, and went to bed, still indisposed."

"*Thursday, Jan.* 12*th.*

"Received and looked over "Blake's Illustrations of Blair's Poem of the Grave." The etchings seem finely executed, and the printing, the letter press I mean, done in the first style. At night, went to the theatre, and acted Sir Pertinax—was received in a most flattering manner by a fashionable and numerous audience. Received a visit from Mr. Wilson, at the theatre. Not yet recovered of my accident."

"*Friday, Jan.* 13*th.*

"To encourage a gentle perspiration, I did not get up till two o'clock. Dined, that being my hour on play days—wrote a little; at night acted Stukely. Beverly and Mrs. Beverley by Mr. Young and Mrs. Siddons. The audience numerous."

"*Saturday, Jan.* 14*th.*

"Before I got up, (which was very late,) received a letter from Mr. Lamb. At night acted Iago. The Othello of Mr. Young, though not what is called imperfect, was yet incorrect as to the text. Very hoarse during the play, and returned home much fatigued."

“ *Sunday*, *Jan.* 15*th*.

“ From the weariness of last night, and the uneasiness of the part hurt by my fall, I did not get up till near four o’clock. After dinner, read the dedication of John Heminge and Henry Condell to the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, before their first edition of Shakspeare’s Plays. Although sufficiently flattering, it does not descend to the base, fulsome adulation contained in those of after days, particularly in the reign of Charles the Second. Their address to the great variety of readers, is quaint and whimsical, and not without some portion of wit and satire. The edition I have, is the folio of 1685. Among the names of the principal actors, Heminge’s name is spelt Hemmings. Read the first act of the Tempest, and after supper the second and third.”

“ *Monday*, *Jan.* 16*th*.

“ After a night passed entirely without sleep, arose at eight. Wrote memorandums. Having breakfasted, felt so harassed that I went again to bed till four o’clock ; drank some chocolate ; took a coach to the theatre, and acted Shylock —the audience numerous. Portia is of too much consequence for Miss N——, an English preceptor would be of great service to her. Notwithstanding, she is a very promising actress. Returned home in a coach. After supper, read the 4th and 5th acts of "the Tempest."

"*Tuesday*, *Jan.* 17*th.*

"I forgot to mention yesterday the receipt of letters from Miss Jackson, at Edinburgh, and Mr. Foote, at Plymouth. Walked for the first time this year in St. James's park—promised Mr. De Wilde, (whom I met,) to sit on Thursday next, for a drawing of Richard, for Bell's Beau Monde. After supper, read the three first acts of "The two Gentlemen of Verona."

"*Wednesday*, *Jan.* 18*th.*

"Arose before seven. Read the fourth and fifth acts of "The two Gentlemen of Verona." Wrote a note to Mess. Fielding and Sharp, of Queen-street, Cheapside. After breakfast read the first act of "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Went with Mrs. Cooke to the corner of Leicester-Square, and viewed the Panoramas of Dublin and Gibraltar. They appear to be well executed. The first, taking in a view of the river Liffey, from Essex bridge, to below the custom-house, with the shipping, &c., Carlisle Bridge, a small part of Trinity College, and another of the late Parliament House, Westmoreland-street—the quays—Foundling Hospital, &c. recalled the city strongly to my mind. The latter place I never saw, but it is a varied, and seems a beautiful view. Walked round St. James's park, and returned home to dinner. During the evening finished " The Merry Wives, &c."

" *Thursday*, *Jan.* 19*th.*

" After breakfast, read the first act of " Measure for Measure," and the first scene of Sir John Falstaff in " the First Part of Henry 4th." —Mr. De Wilde, according to appointment, came and took a full length drawing of me in Richard III. A part of the dress, &c., I put on—this is a complacency I must give up, as it irks me much. After dinner, it continuing wet, I remained at home and slept upon a sofa above four hours before supper—rather indisposed."

" *Friday*, *Jan.* 20*th.*

" Arose a quarter after six, read the remaining scenes of Falstaff—during the day finished reading " Measure for Measure," and ran hastily through the part of Stukely ; acted in the evening with good effect."

Saturday, *Jan.* 21*st.*

" A basket arrived from my mother-in-law, at Newark, containing a leg of mutton and two fowls, *(carrying coals to Newcastle,)* and various letters: two to me from my father and sister-in-law—answered that of the former, went to the theatre, and afterwards to Saint James's."

"*Sunday, Jan. 22d.*

"Arose a little after six—looked over and marked the first and second acts of Richard III. Read the first and second acts of the "Comedy of Errors." Finished marking Richard III. with some references to the folio edition of 1685, and a modern one from Stevens's last edition."

"*Monday, Jan. 23d.*

"Went to the theatre to rehearse Sir John Falstaff in "the First Part of Henry 4th." Received there a letter from Mr. Wilkinson, at Hull, inviting me to act there. Wrote to Miss Jackson at Edinburgh, and to Mr. Maxfield at Portsmouth.

"In the evening acted Richard; the house good; but I was indisposed, and could not give that effect to the character which I often have done, though the applause was much the same."

"*Tuesday, Jan. 24th.*

"Being much indisposed, I did not rise until between three and four in the afternoon. Wrote a note to Mr. Hume, of Long Acre, to prepare a medicine for me from a recipe of Mr. Wilson's in his possession. Acted Falstaff—allowing for the weather, the house a good one."

"*Wednesday, Jan. 25th.*

"In the morning took the medicine I ordered yesterday, and did not rise till afternoon.

"Read the two first acts of "Much ado about Nothing;" received a letter from Mr. Maxfield at Portsmouth, which I answered immediately. I am afraid I shall not be able to visit him. After dinner finished "Much ado about Nothing."

"After tea spent an idle, wearisome evening, not feeling the least inclination to any employment."

"*Thursday, Jan. 26th.*

"Looked over some papers—called at a shop in Newport-street, and gave orders for a print of myself, in *Iago*, to be prepared with a handsome frame and sent to Mr. John Wilkinson, manager of the Theatres Royal, York, Hull, &c. Called and paid Mr. Bagshaw; looked over some morning papers—went to the theatre, and ordered my dress for Saturday next. Received a strange rhyming, anonymous letter, by the two-penny post—gave it what it wanted, *fire.* Wrote to Mr. Maxfield at Portsmouth. Walked in the Temple. Waited, for the first time for many years, to see the figures strike the quarters at St. Dunstan's—I was not the only grown up gazer. Met Mr. Quin and Mr. Waddy; the former I have not seen before this season.—Wrote to Mr. Wilkinson at Hull. Ordered some plays from Mr. Barker's, and desired him to discontinue "The Cabinet" for me. Read the first and second acts of "Love's Labour Lost;" after dinner finished the comedy. Read some anecdotes, &c."

"*Friday, Jan. 27th.*

"Read the first act of "The Midsummer's Night Dream." Walked in St. James's and the Green Park, went round by Piccadilly, and rehearsed Sir Giles Over-reach. Quince, the carpenter, in the first act of the "Midsummer's Night Dream," while he is distributing the parts of the interlude intended to be performed before the Duke and Duchess of Athens, is interrupted by Bottom the weaver, who wishes to act more characters than one. This reminds me of some actors (as they were called) whom I have heard of, perhaps seen some, who would willingly act more than one. I have some years ago seen a man who, I have been assured, on the same night and at the same time, *went on* for, or as it is phrased, *doubled*, Hotspur and Falstaff—Those who have only seen plays in London, cannot have an idea of the wretched and preposterous shifts to which itinerant parties are often compelled. The Athenian actors, as in this play they are drawn, were *mechanics*. So are some of our actors even of note! Some of them very dull mechanics. After dinner read the second act of "The Midsummer," &c. Acted Stukely; the audience numerous."

"*Saturday, Jan. 28th.*

"Looked over some accounts. Wrote to Mr. Maxfield at Portsmouth. The letter contained an unwilling disappointment.

"Took a short walk in the Park, and afterwards rehearsed Sir Giles Over-reach. Walked again in the Park, and on my return home found the plays ordered from Mr. Barker. At the theatre received another nonsensical anonymous letter from the same crazy wretch as the last. After dinner, at near five o'clock, received letters from Mr. Lamb and Mr. Maxfield. My Bath paper did not arrive. Acted Sir Giles Over-reach well, in some parts very well; and had I not been disconcerted by the stupidity of some, it would have been a good whole. Certain plays are sadly neglected."

"*Sunday, Jan. 29th.*

"Looked over some plays. Read "The News." Finished a "Midsummer's Night Dream;" marked some plays to be interleaved. Read "The Rehearsal," with the prologue and epilogue, the key to it, and the publisher's address to the public. The author, the witty George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, wrote it in ridicule of the tedious, bombastic, senseless style of many plays much followed during the reign of the second Charles—Bayes was the caricature of Dryden. It is now very seldom acted, and has been reduced to three acts. I saw it acted at the Haymarket, as a full piece, Mr. Foote the Bayes. "The Critic, or, a Tragedy Rehearsed," by R. B. Sheridan, is upon the same plan, the first act excepted. The play might be now new-modelled, and a sufficient variety of new dramas selected, from whence might be extracted (in some verbatim,) numerous passages in defiance of composition, wit, genius, or common sense. Read the first and second acts of "The Merchant of Venice." In the evening finished it, and read the first act of "As You Like It;" after supper read in Baker's Chronicle."

" *Monday, Jan.* 30*th.*

" This being the martyrdom of King Charles the First, by order of the State, I lose 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Being caught in the rain, I stood in a passage in Pall Mall, with two men in Turkish, or rather Moorish, habits, and a black. I then adjouned to Hatchet's Coffee-house, so that I breakfasted twice. How many in this great metropolis have gone without any! I am certain, though I confess my inability to point out the method, that not an individual need be destitute of the common necessaries of life within the kingdom. From the vast sums of money imposed and collected for the use of the poor, and the various modes (some yet untried) of employing those who are able to work, distress and misery may be almost banished.

" Called at the theatre, and wrote a note to Mr. Harris. At my return home, found a card from Mr. Watson, alias *Old Gag*, of the Cheltenham theatre. Finished " As You Like It."

CHAP. XXII.

Arts used to depreciate Mr. Cooke—Drury-Lane Theatre burnt—Summer of 1809, *Cooke at Liverpool—his Cups—New Covent Garden Theatre opens—Kemble's poetical Address—O. P. Riot from Sept.* 18*th to December* 15*th—Wm. Cobbett—Mr. Cooke's Account of Himself during this Period.*

My hero appears at this time to have been rapidly sinking in public estimation, and the writers before-mentioned multiply their coward blows upon him as he falls. Even his Stukely is represented as being ludicrous, and is made to yield in comparison with that of the late John Palmer. The same writers hold up Kemble as a kind of demi-god, and a comparison between them is now no longer dreamt of.

When I think of the talents of George Frederick Cooke, how do I curse "the invisible spirit of wine," and the imprudence, the improvidence, the mad vice, which rendered those talents of no avail! Kemble enjoyed the triumph, which prudence, not genius, obtained for him.

On the twenty-fourth of February, 1809, the theatre Royal, Drury Lane, was destroyed by fire. Mr. Cooke was absent from London when this event took place. His *witty friend*, the editor of the Monthly Mirror, gives the following choice *morceau*, on the occasion of his leaving London at this time.

" Mr. Cooke has suddenly weighed anchor, leaving the following note to the managers. " The wind shifts round to the north, I scud before it. If a change takes place to the south, I shall be back by the 6th of March.

" Yours,

" A Cook, and *no Scullion*."

" This looks rebellion."

Mr. Cooke has told me, that he was at Hull when he first heard of the destruction of Drury-Lane. He appears to have left London with the approbation of Mr. Harris; to have proceeded to Newark, and thence to York, where he played some nights. He says in a fragment, before me, apparently intended to have been a full account of this journey: " On Wednesday, Feb. 22, 1809, about six in the morning, set out, accompanied by Mrs. Cooke, from my apartments in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in a post-chaise, and breakfasted at the Green Man in Barnet." At one in the afternoon of the next day, they " arrived at Newark, at the house of Mr. Lamb, Mrs.

Cooke's father." The next day, the 24th, in the afternoon, he proceeded, alone, to Doncaster, and on the 25th, at noon, sat out for Hull. —" When we entered the boat," to cross Boothem ferry, he says, " I perceived a poor slender old man, with an iron upon one wrist, under custody of a stout young man, who was conveying him to Hull, to go on board a king's ship, as a punishment, by the law, for *shooting a hare!* He seemed miserable, and vulgar, and unfit for any service at sea; which was the opinion of an old boatman, who was certain they would reject him, as they had done others much fitter for the service. It is a strange circumstance, that the law should make serving in the navy, our boast and pride, *a punishment!* What injustice and degradation to our seamen, for the toils and hardships they endure, to make the commission of a crime the passport for admission into their society, and from thence acquiring a right to participate, when they occur, in their glorious battles, and well-earned honours and rewards. Now, when the navy is so stigmatized *by law*, can any honest man be expected to *volunteer* his services?"

He arrives that night " at the Cross Keys, in the market-place, Kingston upon Hull." The next day " called upon Mr. Wilkinson, and was received in a most friendly manner by him and Mrs. W." During his stay here, Mr. Cooke made a part of Mr. Wilkinson's family, for dinner and supper, and lodged in "Blanket-Row."

On the 3d of April, I find Mr. Cooke playing again as usual in London; and on the 17th, his birth day, when he had completed his fifty-third year, he began, perhaps for that reason, again to make memoranda of the passing events of his life, but ceased after four days attention. He was employed on the above day in copying an inventory of household furniture, &c. taken, as I suppose, in consequence of the dissolution of his domestic establishment. On the 19th he says, "a packet was delivered to me by Mrs. M'Naughton, containing the draft of a deed which I will not sign." The next day "a young man who was one of two who brought the packet yesterday, called for my answer to it. Such an answer as I could give, I gave. Mr. John Brandon called this morning, and I perceive he is a party in the business. Mr. Glassington, at the request of Mr. Henry Harris, called to desire me to take Monday the first of May for my night. I agreed to it, and we settled the night's entertainments to be "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," a dance, and "The King and the Miller of Mansfield."

On Friday morning, the 26th of May, 1809, Mr. Cooke left London at six o'clock, and arrived at Chichester in the evening. The next evening he played Shylock and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm. The next day in the afternoon he proceeded to Portsmouth, and on Monday evening the 29th, played the same parts that he had acted at Chichester the previous Saturday. On Tuesday afternoon he returned to Chichester, and set out in the mail coach for London, where he arrived on Wednesday morning about six.

On Thursday evening, the first of June, he left London for Liverpool, where he arrived on the morning of the third. He opened on Monday the fifth in Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant.

At this time Mr. Cooke played three weeks in Liverpool, with such success and so much to the satisfaction of Messrs. Lewis and Knight, the managers, that they presented him with a pair of silver cups, as a testimony of their high sense of his unrivalled talents.

This was an opportunity not to be missed by his *witty friend*, and accordingly we are told that it "was very satirical of Messrs. Lewis and Knight, for it was as if they had said, now, master Cooke, you have what you like—*a cup too much.*"

Mr. M'Cready came to Liverpool to accompany Mr. Cooke to Manchester, and on the 25th of June they left Liverpool, and arrived at Manchester the next day. That night Mr.

Cooke played Richard, on Tuesday, Sir Pertinax, and on Wednesday, Shylock and Sir Archy. The three nights produced near four hundred pounds.

Mr. Rock, "who took Manchester in his way to Edinburgh," now accompanied my hero to the latter place. They left Manchester on the 29th of June, 1809, and arrived in the metropolis of the once Scottish kingdom on the first of July. "On Monday, July the third," says Mr. Cooke, "acted Richard, and between that and the 22d, eleven more nights. In the *race* week *gave* the managers two nights, which was wrong, and on Thursday, August the 7th, appeared in Gibby, for the benefit of Mr. Fawcett. During this visit to Edinburgh, I went twice to Roslin, an insignificant village, but the situation delightful. The ruins of the castle and chapel highly picturesque. The first day we (Mrs. Rock, Mrs. Young, Mrs. Vining, her mother, and myself,) dined at Dalkeith. A very pleasant day in every sense. On Tuesday, August the 15th, in company of a young lady of the late Edinburgh company, (for the mimic sceptre had now fallen into the hands of Mr. Henry Siddons,) left town for Perth, by the Queen's Ferry and Kinross. We reached the former about nine at night, and took up our abode at the George Inn. The next day I removed to commodious and neat lodgings, four stories high, and in the evening acted Richard. I afterwards played Iago and Sir Archy; Sir Pertinax; Shylock and Sir Archy; and finished on Tuesday the 22d with Sir Pertinax. The Man of the World had never been performed in Perth. The first night was a *great* house, 47*l.*, the second about half. They did not seem *theatrical*, and some of the good things seemed severe, *but no joke.* The theatre had been a large room, called the Glover's-Hall; it was tolerably fitted up, but very dirty and inconvenient. I had a slight view of the town last year, when making a small tour. It is, in general, well built, and very beautifully situated on the northern bank of the Tay. From the hill of Kinnoul, a lofty eminence in the environs, the ascent to which is gradual, and handsomely shaded each side by trees, the prospect is varied, extensive, and pleasing. The ancient castle of Scone, the place of coronation of the Scottish Monarch,

> "And gone to Scone to be invested,"

lies about two miles above the town, on the opposite side of the river. It is now quite modernized, and is the seat of the Earl of Mansfield. On Wednesday the 23d, left Perth, and returned to Edinburgh by the same route. On Saturday evening began a journey to

Liverpool, but at Barkhouse, 22 miles from the capital, received so severe a fall, that I was constrained to return thither on the evening of Tuesday the 29th. This detained me till Saturday afternoon, the 9th of September, when I commenced my journey for London in the mail coach, and arrived at the Bull and Mouth about five in the morning, of Tuesday the 12th. I immediately went to bed. Breakfasted early in the afternoon, and took a long country walk; a part of which I believe was new to me."

On the 20th Mr. Cooke took up his abode at his old lodgings, No. 8, Panton-square, from whence he had taken his departure when he left London in June.

On the evening of the eighteenth of September, 1809, the new theatre, Covent Garden, was opened. The proprietors had previously advertised that the price of admission was advanced to 7*s*. for the boxes, and 4*s*. for the pit, the galleries remaining at the old prices. It was likewise understood, that Madame Catalani had been engaged by the managers; and that the number of private boxes greatly exceeded that of the former theatre. These were grievances which a certain portion of the populace, calling themselves the public, determined not to submit to; and this great and beautiful building, which had arisen with redoubled splendour from its ashes, as by magic, was crowded to its utmost capacity, by an immense mob, who came, not to hear the pieces advertised, but to prevent all theatrical entertainment at this place, until these grievances were redressed.

Mr. Kemble came forward to deliver an address prepared for the occasion, but could not be heard. It would, perhaps, have been fortunate for his reputation, as a man of taste, if not as an author, if it had never been seen; for, as the occasions were similar, we cannot but expect something which may bear comparison with the address Garrick delivered on opening Drury-Lane in 1747; but, alas! though the theatre was greater, and the orator taller, the poet of the day was such as Garrick's audience would have hissed, if Garrick could have been so destitute of taste, as to have presented such lines to them.

Instead of,

"When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the Stage, immortal Shakspeare rose!
Each change of many colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new;
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil after him in vain," &c.

Mr. Kemble says,

"In early Greece, and in a barbarous age,
A wretched tumbril was the actor's stage;

The muse, with cheek reclin'd in pensive shame,
Blush'd for her wanderers from the path of fame.
Æschylus sprang;—and storm'd, as he arose,
His country's passions, like his country's foes.
Rough from the battle, trained to vanquish men,
E'en as his sword he wielded, so his pen.
He smote the heart, the trembling sense opprest,
And gave no quarter to the human breast.
  "Yet stage-improvement mark'd the soldier's sway,
And tinged with taste the captives to his lay.
Then, first, (the cart of Thespis overthrown,)
Form'd by rude planks, a theatre was known;
Cop'd by the Heavens, it overspread the lawn,
And light on scenic dress appear'd to dawn.
But, all divine, when Sophocles appear'd,
'Twas then the drama's majesty was rear'd.
Builders and decorators came;—their boast
Was, who could grace the lofty poet most:—
The lofty poet lack'd not brains to know,
That dramatists require the drama's show.
NATURE's perfection springs from various parts;
And "NATURE's MIRROR" needs the sister-arts.
  Hence grew the splendour of the scene; and hence
The hand-maids that embellish eloquence:—
Dance, music, painting, pageantry, parade,—
All that give zest, or yield illusive aid.
  Rome caught the sparks from Greece; improved the plan,
At last the flame through modern Europe ran;
OUR scene now decks in an illumined age,
The bards who first gave vigour to our stage:
Thus Shakspeare's fire burns brighter than before,
And may the stage that boasts him—burn no more!
  For this our fabric—banish we to-night,
Figures worn threadbare, metaphors grown trite,

No phœnix from her ashes shall arise,—
Stale to our thoughts as sparrows to our eyes:
No naked truism be cloak'd anew,
To tell, that fire which cheers, consumes us too.
No;—let a Briton now to Britons speak;
His cause is strong, although his language weak.
We feel with glory, all to Britain due,
And British artists raised this pile for you:
While zealous as our patrons, here we stand
To guard the staple genius of our land.
Solid our building, heavy our expense;
We rest our claims on your munificence:—
What ardor plans, a nation's taste to raise,
A nation's liberality repays."

Such was the prologue on the opening of the new Covent Garden theatre. A lamentable proof of the depreciation of the English drama. A depreciation not caused by a want of poetic genius in the nation, but by that monopolizing and money-making spirit, which excludes from the stage the works of those who are not the hirelings, or connexions, of managers; or renders access so irksome, that genius will not bend to obtain it.

If Mr. Kemble was not the author of this effusion of poetic fancy, he was, at least, its approver, or else he insulted the public by offering to them that which he despised; but I think the man who could revive Dryden's and Davenant's Tempest, to the exclusion of Shakspeare's, or adopt any of their impertinent and gross additions, and who could add to the witch scene of Macbeth, such stuff as the following:

"Titty Tiffin,
Keep it stiff in;
Fire Drake puckey,
Make it lucky;
Liard Robin,
You must bobin,"

may fairly be supposed the author of the exquisite poetry he attempted to deliver to the "illuminated populace of London."

If such a copy of verses had been presented to Mr. Cooke, George Frederick would have rejected them with contempt; he had not read over much, it is certain, but his discriminative judgment was quick; therefore his taste in literature, if not finished, was sound.

The only specimen I possess of his rhyming talents is a copy of verses written in his solitude at Appleby, in 1807, and I think he will not suffer as a poet by comparison with the introducer of "Titty Tiffin," or the writer of *the Address.*

"How are we ruin'd"—by wits of the sock,
A joke of the Thespian school;
Oft heard from Joe Munden, or fat Tony Rock,
When sportive they're playing the fool.

Across the Atlantic, when war's stern alarms,
Called Britons the rebels to brave;

And leave the fam'd Island with all its gay charms,
Their country's bright honour to save—

A chief led them on, 'mong warriors renown'd,
Who danger and death was defying;
Yet quidnuncs at home, safe on their own ground,
"Oh! HOWE—are we ruined?" kept crying."

A brief history of what has been called the Covent Garden, or O. P. Riot, shall conclude my chapter.

From Monday the 18th of September, to Saturday the 22d, inclusive, though a play and after-piece had been performed, nothing had been heard by the audience, but the noise they themselves made, except now and then a piece of a *prose* address, from Mr. Kemble, to persuade them to be quiet. On the last mentioned night the house was closed by order of the Lord Chamberlain, until the accounts of the proprietors should be submitted to a committee composed of the Governor of the Bank of England, the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, and others, and their opinion had as to the propriety of raising the prices.

On the 2d of October the public were informed that the committee, for examining the affairs of Covent Garden Theatre, consisting of Sir Charles Price, Sir Thomas Plomer, John Sylvester, Esq., John Whitmore, Esq., and John Julius Angerstein, Esq., had decided in favour of raising the prices, and their reasons stated;

the amount of which was, that, at the old prices, the proprietors would lose by their business.

On the 4th of October, the house opened again, but John Bull declared himself unsatisfied. Mr. Kemble made another speech, enforcing the report of the committee, but the *public* declared it all stuff, and continued to amuse themselves by all kinds of inharmonious noises, (including their own singing,) exhibitions of placards, dancing, mock-fighting, &c., until they thought proper to disperse.

The honourable character of the gentlemen composing the committee, was not questioned, but the prevalent opinion was that they had been deceived, and were not competent to judge the question. The managers now resorted to force, and pugilists by profession were introduced to overawe, or beat out the rioters. The consequence was battles innumerable. The police interfered, and night after night, leaders of the rioters were dragged to Bow-street, and committed or forced to find bail in large sums. Mr. Kemble no longer appeared as a player on the stage, and when he came forward as manager, every indecent and opprobrious epithet was exhausted on him. Cooke appeared in Richard, Shylock, &c., but was not attended to more than his companions; however, the mob used to *cheer him*, by way of letting him know that he was not an object of their displeasure, and a placard was exhibited with these words,

> "Cooke deserves our pity,
> Kemble our contempt."

Mr. William Cobbett, who is well known for the energy and clearness of his style, offered his opinion to the public on the subject in dispute, and in some measure proposed himself as mediator between the high contending parties.

"In this case," says he, "as in all others where there are numerous parties, and where the quarrel is of any length of duration, the grounds of the quarrel change, and at this moment the O. P. means *no hired bruisers, no legal prosecution*, much more than it means *Old Prices*. The advance of price has been lost sight of, amidst the scuffles in the pit, the examinations at Bow-street, and the commitments to Bridewell. These are what the public NOW complain of, nor will it be very easy to wear them from their minds. The number of those who have had a relation, a friend, an acquaintance, or a neighbour, dragged by thief-takers before police-justices, and by those justices dealt with, is now not small, and every day it must become greater; so that if the dispute continue much longer, inevitable ruin must fall upon the Theatre.

"There appeared to me to be something very unwise, on the part of the managers, at the first setting off. To show the *water-engines* to the audience; to treat them with such inexpressible contempt, and especially before it was possible for them to be met for the purpose of opposition, was, to say the least of it, extremely unwise. This unequivocal mark of contempt, together with the construction of the house, by which the middling class of people were shut out from their usual chance of comfortable and conspicuous places, seems to have been the great cause of an opposition to the thing, blended with resentment against Mr. Kemble, who appeared of course to be the author of the unmerited indignity. After this it is no wonder that he became the great object of attack; that he became more obnoxious than all other persons and things put together; that neither his person, his character, nor his family, were spared.

"Amongst the terms of reproach which Mr. Kemble has, through his want of discretion at the onset, brought upon himself, is that of *upstart*. So true it is, that when once people are thoroughly angry, they never think of what they say.

"Mr. Kemble and his sister have been *celebrated* as players for upwards of *twenty years*, I believe; and ought they, at the end of twenty years of a life of such labour, to be called *upstarts*, because they are said to possess considerable fortunes? How would any man, who by his industry or talent, has acquired a fortune, like to be, on that account, called an upstart? No man would like it; and, really, I am afraid, that this treatment of the Kembles, if it be persevered in, must have the effect of preventing in future any very great endeavours to arrive at excellence in acting. It must have a tendency to degrade the whole thing, ahd make stage playing little more than grimace and buffoonery.

" From the first it struck me to be a violation of the rights of property, *to attempt to compel people to sell entertainment at the price pointed out by the purchaser.* In a common case, there is no doubt at all that it would be so; but, then, in this case, comes the argument of the *patent*, and the *monopoly*. But this has little weight; though it forms distinction between this and common cases, it does not, after all that I have, since last week, attentively read on the subject, appear to me to be conclusive against the managers.

" A monopoly always means an exclusive leave to do whatever the grant allows of. Now, this is not the case in the present instance; for, not only *may* others obtain permission to act plays, but plays are actually exhibited by other persons, at this very time, and in the same metropolis.

"I shall be told, that the other persons have not such *convenient places*, and such good actors; but, really, I cannot think this will be seriously urged, against the charge of *a shilling* more for the boxes, and *sixpence* more for the pit, at Covent Garden Theatre; I cannot believe this at any rate."

Mr. Cobbett proposes the following steps to be taken by the managers, to bring about a reconciliation.

"1. The circle of the *private boxes* should be done away, and the whole of the space thrown open to the whole of the public, as in the old theatre.

"2. The "*pigeon holes*," as they are called, should be done away, and the shilling gallery thrown open.

"3. All the *actions and prosecutions*, arising out of the row, should be dropped instantly.

"4. A declaration from Mr. Kemble, in person, on the part of the whole of the managers, that they recognize, in the fullest sense of the words, an absolute right in the audience or in any of the audience assembled at the theatre, to express, either by signs or noises of any sort, their disapprobation of any person, or of any thing within the theatre."

"Amongst the "*terms of peace*," as they were called, proposed some time ago, were included a BEGGING OF PARDON on the part of Mr. Kemble, and the DISMISSION of Mr. Brandon. This was excusable, perhaps, under the circumstances of the moment; but I am sure, or at least I hope, that there is no Englishman, who, upon cool reflection, would propose such a thing. There is a meanness in the idea of inflicting vengeance upon Mr. Brandon, and especially as the party inflicting it, would be always hidden from the party on whom it was inflicted. And, as to bringing Mr. Kemble forward for the *express* purpose of *begging pardon;* to compel him to come forth like a culprit, and humble himself before a promiscuous assembly, including, no doubt, all his private enemies; to insist upon degrading any human being in such a way, as I am sure it is what no man with a drop of English blood in his veins would demand, so I hope, that, for the credit of the English stage, for the honour of theatrical talent, and of literature, it is what nothing upon earth would induce Mr. Kemble to submit to."

The reader will soon see how far the "mean idea of inflicting vengeance upon Mr. Brandon" was carried; how amiably the managers submitted to be the instruments of vengeance inflicted on a man for zealously serving them and their interests; and how prettily they not only apologized, but apologized for not apologizing sooner.

On the first of November, Mr. Clifford, a barrister, was taken before the magistrates for wearing O. P. in his hat; but persisted in his having a right so to do, and was acquitted. He from henceforward became the favourite, and in fact the leader of the O. P.'s. Mr. Clifford commenced an action against Mr. Brandon for assault, and false imprisonment, and a verdict was given in his favour. On the 14th of December the O. P.'s had a dinner at the Crown and Anchor, Mr. Clifford in the chair. He informed the company that he had had an interview with Mr. Kemble, who was now present, and that a disposition prevailed on the part of the proprietors to remove grievances and conciliate the public. The meeting appears to have been nearly as riotous as the late theatrical pit-meetings, but the result was, that the private boxes should be reduced to what they were in 1802, the prices of the boxes to be 7*s*. and the pit to be reduced to the old price, 3*s*. 6*d*. All actions and prosecutions to be dropped.

Mr. Kemble stood up amidst tumults of applause, and made a speech of thanks to the gentlemen. He then repaired to the theatre, and from the stage made known the treaty which he had concluded with the representatives of the public.

The sovereign people were tolerably satisfied, but insisted on Mr. Brandon's discharge, for having been very active in promoting the interests of his employers, the managers. This affair not being settled on this evening, the theatre was kept in continued riot for one more night of exhibition. The next day Mr. Kemble was advertised for Penruddock, and at the foot of the bills appeared a statement of the concessions and apology of the proprietors.

At an early hour the theatre was crowded. Some person from the dress boxes informed the public, that he was authorized to say, that Mr. Brandon was discharged. The people, however, vociferated Kemble, and he, obedient to their call, came forward dressed for Penruddock, and in a short speech confirmed the information. Something more was demanded, and a letter signifying the public wish handed to Mr. Kemble. No answer being returned, the riot commenced again, and the first act of the piece was lost. Mr. Kemble at length came forward, and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen—I understand that offence has been given by the introduction of improper persons into the theatre, during the late disputes. I have to ask pardon for not apologizing sooner. In my own name, and in the name of my fellow proprietors, I beg leave to express our regret for what has taken place; and to state, that our first care shall be, that no such occurrence shall ever more happen again."

This was the final speech on the occasion, by Mr. Kemble, as stated in the Monthly Mirror of the time, and thus ended the O. P. riot on the 15th of December, 1809, having continued 86 days.

I will insert Mr. Cooke's account of this affair, (omitting what has been anticipated,) and of himself, during the continuance of the riots.

" The proprietors deemed it necessary to advance the prices by an additional shilling on the boxes, and six-pence on the pit; the galleries remained as usual. The violent and indecorous commotion that arose, if not unprecedented, was never exceeded in any public place." "On Wednesday the 20th Sept. I attempted Richard. The riot continued, not a speech heard." "On Tuesday afternoon, the 3d of October, sat out in the Telegraph for Leicester." Here he lodged in the same house with Mr. M'Cready, the manager, and after playing four nights, returned to London on the 9th.

"Tuesday morning the 10th, at six o'clock, in company of *young Gag*, went from the Golden +, Charing +, in the Cheltenham coach to Oxford, where we dined. We had two pleasant fellow-travellers, who here left us; and *young Gag* and myself proceeded post to Birmingham, which we reached about midnight. I remained while I staid, *at young Gag's* lodgings. Next morning saw *old Gag*. Played Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Richard first and last, and Sir Pertinax in the middle. Leicester very far more pleasant and profitable than Birmingham. On Saturday evening, the 14th Oct. turned my back upon the town, and arrived at five in the afternoon of next day at home.

"On Saturday afternoon, the 9th of December, (the riots at the theatre still continuing nightly, sat out in a post-chaise, supped, and slept at Guilford, and at one P. M. the next day, arrived at the Crown in Portsmouth. On Monday evening acted Iago, on Tuesday Sir Pertinax, the receipts great. After supper, on the latter night, posted back to town.

"On Thursday the 14th, the rioters had a dinner at the Crown and Anchor. Mr. Kemble attended them, and a peace was patched up, not the most honourable, which was ratified, as far as it could be, that night at the theatre; and the next, Mr. Kemble made his *second* appearance in the season, and was well received."

CHAP. XXIII.

Mr. Cooke's degraded Situation in London, in the Season of 1809-10—*Trouble he caused to the Managers—Plays Henry the 8th—Plays for the last Time in London on the 5th June,* 1810—*Editor of the Monthly Mirror made to satirize Himself—Epitaph on Mr. Cooke.*

The O. P. riot over, and the business of the theatre going on once more as usual, I find that Mr. Cooke received a full share again of that attention from the periodical publications of the day, which had been suspended by matter of more moment. My degraded hero seems to be the theme of each witling; and the notoriety of his weakness, with that loss of consequence which he had in a great measure brought upon himself, seem to have driven him to more frequent aberrations, and to more pitiable exhibitions of his shame.

On the 25th of December, Mr. Cooke was advertised as the representative of Horatius, in the Roman Father. He came on the stage merely to expose himself. He was incapable of speaking, and was led off amidst the tumultuous marks of disapprobation, which he so justly merited.

On the 28th he was announced for Shylock, but did not make his appearance at the theatre, and after much tumult, Mr. Charles Kemble was permitted to represent the character.

The trouble which Mr. Cooke's behaviour about this time, and perhaps before, gave to the managers of the theatre, must have been immeasurable. They could not calculate upon him from one hour to another. Sometimes when they supposed him to be sober, he came to the theatre, and created riot and confusion, by insisting upon going before the public, utterly incompetent to perform that for which he was pledged; and sometimes when he was in a state of comparative sanity, he would deliberately determine that he would not play, and either go to some place where he would not easily be found, or send word that he could not, or would not, act that evening.

It is related of him, that with predetermination he once had his Richard's dress removed privately from the theatre to his lodgings, being advertized for that character, to be performed the next night, and instead of going to dress for the part as usual, he prepared himself at home, and rode to a place near the theatre, where he waited until the very moment of ringing up the curtain, knowing full well *what the feelings* of his friend John would be; and then, at the moment when Mr. Kemble was preparing to step forward with an apology, and perhaps to offer his own Richard, as a substitute, in marches the true Richard, and takes his place at the side, ready to begin.

He has told me that once he dined alone at a coffee-house in the vicinity of the theatre on the day of his performing, with the full intention of going early to his dressing-room; but after dinner, the thought suggested itself that he would not play that night, and he determined that he would not play. "I had not been drinking at the time," said he, "but I felt the humour come over me, and I indulged it—a kind of madness—and there I sate indulging in a kind of reverie, but determined that I would not go to the theatre. Mr. Kemble, however, heard that I was not in my dressing-room; the alarm spread, and after a time he found out where I was; so he came in, and after a little chat I gave up the whim, and went with him and acted as well as ever I did."

On the 8th of January, 1810, Mr. Cooke was again announced, and for Richard the Third. The house was crowded and an apology was expected. Accordingly he came forward previously to assuming the lofty demeanour of the triumphant Duke of Gloster, as a pitiful suppliant to crave indulgence, and to promise what he could never hope to perform. He addressed the audience and entreated their indulgence, but when he came to "If you will restore me once more to the favour I enjoyed, I promise—" he was interrupted by plaudits, and dismissed, to assume a more brilliant, if not more virtuous, character. Poor Cooke! it was time that you should be removed from the scene of such humiliation; for in removal was the only hope that now remained of reformation.

He continued to play very steadily, and with his usual excellence, those great parts in which he shone with an unrivalled lustre, but his attraction had in a great degree ceased; and no actress's husband, or dramatic author, or dramatic author's friend, thought it worth their trouble to make particular mention of him in the way of praise, and to dispraise that which all had concurred to admire, they dared not. But on the 5th of May, Mr. Cooke appeared in a new character, and the opportunity was eagerly seized to write him still further down with the public.

The opportunity offered was his playing the character of Henry the Eighth. Public opinion did not shield him from a blow in this part, and those who had been shooting the pointless shafts of *their* wit at him for some time past, now hurled venom and filth on his head with the most shameless effrontery.

On the 5th of June Mr. Cooke played Falstaff, in the 1st part of Henry Fourth. This was the last time he played in London. He soon after left the metropolis of England, never more to return.

The review I have taken of Mr. Cooke's life to the present period, impresses upon me fully and deeply a sense of injustice done him as an actor, which, however great his demerits as a man, must have been keenly felt; and which, undoubtedly, soured his mind, and fitted him for listening with an eager ear to the proposals which were accidentally made to him by Mr. Cooper. He was discontented with his situation in London, and felt that he was overwhelmed by a hostile interest in the theatre, to which he was attached. He felt that the time had gone by when he had power to combat that influence; that he had no longer energy enough to erect the standard of opposition; and that external and internal enemies had lowered him in the estimation of the public. With these feelings, it is not to be wondered at, that he should wish for a change of scene, and a chance of a renewal of those triumphs which had once raised him to the pinnacle of histrionic fame, and to a respectable footing in his own and the public estimation.

The Monthly Mirror was the vehicle for most of those pitiful witticisms which drove Mr. Cooke to increased acts of madness, and finally drove him from his country. I have before mentioned them, and will now insert, from among the truly valuable communications made to the work, a portion of "A distressing Case. By the author of My Pocket-Book." An author who has done essential service to the cause of literature.

This paper is the most severe and cutting satire upon the editor of the Monthly Mirror that the wit of man could devise; for, under the pretence of lashing those who are the objects of the editor's witticisms, this real wit, by making him insert burlesque specimens of his own style, exhibits him in the ludicrous attitude and employment of a man so holding a mirror as to expose his own deformities.

The writer represents himself as a man anxiously watching for opportunities to pun and quibble upon the names or notorious propensities of public characters, and more especially wishing for the death of such personages, that he may publish the ready-made epitaphs he has composed, upon the editor's plan.

First he states his disappointment, arising from the good health and safe return of Mrs. JORDAN from Ireland; then his disappointed hope that Mr. BATE DUDLEY would be knock'd i'the head by the *peep o'day boys* in the same kingdom. "Then," says he, there's Mr. Hook, a dramatist, who is every season in imminent danger of damnation. Very well, he's damned, but he won't die—and *why* should he follow his works, if he finds that good judges don't approve them? He afterwards proceeds—"Was not Sir JOHN CARR a bird of promise?—but has he not boxed the compass in his *tours*, and yet constantly returned in a whole skin—always saving and excepting his *travels* in the *court of King's Bench!*" "There is no chance for me in this quarter—good authors may die—

"Heav'n takes the *good*, too good on earth to stay,
"And leaves the *bad*, too bad to take away."

"Lastly, for I will trouble you with no more, there is Mr. COOKE—there was a subject for you—*all hope!* He was not a week in town before I had him in my collection, but to what purpose?—Oh! it is a gross imposition to report that *brandy* is *poison*—believe me, a mere bugbear, manifestly invented by *old women* to keep it all to themselves! Had there been a shadow of truth in it, do you imagine that the man could have been alive and merry now, who has himself alone, since his arrival in London, drunk more than even Mr. SHERIDAN?—that is to say, more than would have destroyed all the *rats* in the united kingdom, and *Hanover* into the bargain! Nonsense. There is a *providence over a drunken man*, and there's an end of it!

"The epitaphs of these five I will keep no longer—their case is hopeless!" He then, after continuing his strain of satire upon the editor, to whom he has sent the essay for publication, some time longer, with equal severity concludes: "That I am not so dull though as ridiculous as many, is a tribute which I claim as my due. *Allons.*"

Of the EPITAPHS, I will insert that on Mr. Cooke.

"ON MR. COOKE:

"*Who lost his Life by falling into a Well, in his Way to keep an Assignation in a Church-yard at Manchester.*

"'Twas not the *quantity*, we think,
But the vast *strangeness* of the drink,
That kill'd poor Cooke! Yet grieving save,
For he was *going* to the *grave*:
This accident but merely sent him quicker,
And as *he* lov'd to be—*in liquor!*

"The idea of COOKE's dying by *water*, (an idea belonging entirely to a 'poet of *imagination all* compact,') seemed to tickle the fancy of my muse, and she was very fecund on the occasion. Here is the other twin-flower with which she graced his last *exit*:

"Of such a toper none e'er heard or read,
"For he is still *in liquor*, though he's dead."

Can any thing be conceived better calculated to hold up the editor of the Monthly Mirror to ridicule? the author of "Cooke in his Cups;" "What he lov'd—a cup too much;" "A Cook and no Scullion;" "Cooke and Cooper transported," &c. &c.? yet he was so dull as to publish it without discerning the satire; or, we will hope, so prudent as to pretend not to see it, and determine to profit by the lesson, and amend.

Mr. Cooke played in Liverpool this summer with his accustomed success. He likewise played at Preston. His meeting with Mr. Cooper, an event so pregnant with adventure, so fruitful of consequences of the utmost importance to my hero, shall begin the next chapter of my work.

CHAP. XXIV.

Mr. Cooper arrives at Liverpool, July, 1810, *and meets Mr. Cooke—Conversation—Verbal Proposition for Mr. Cooke to go to America —Written Proposal in August—Mr. Cooke at Preston—Second Meeting of Mess. Cooke and Cooper at Liverpool—Mr. Cooke leaves Liverpool—Cooper follows—Interview at the First Stage—Interview at Prescot—Scene with the Liverpool Men—Return towards Liverpool.*

Mr. Cooper arrived at Liverpool the seventh of July, 1810, and saw by the papers that Cooke was advertised to play Richard III. that evening. Cooper went immediately to see him, and found him just arrived in town. He did not at first recollect the traveller, but soon exclaimed—

"Where do you come from?"

"Just landed from America."

"When did you leave it?"

"Three weeks ago; and I have been in Ireland before coming hither."

"So, so—why they have shortened the way

—it's nothing of a trip now. Well, and what are you about?"

"I have come to pass a little time in Europe—I don't know how long—and took England in my way to France. I wish to see Paris, and make a tour through the continent. One of my objects in England is to engage performers. You may, perhaps, assist me, by recommending some."

"Recommend them! Why there are plenty who deserve—(looking aside and laughing)—transportation! But what do you most want?"

"A lady."

"Ah! I thought so."

"A lady for tragedy and genteel comedy."

"Miss Norton's your mark, and I think she is likely to go."

This led to inquiries as to Miss Norton's present situation, salary, and yearly income; and a comparison between that and what she could have in America. The conversation naturally passed on to the state of the drama in America—theatres—their size—receipts—the salaries generally paid; to all which Cooke lent an attentive ear. Cooper at length says,

"I go off for London to-morrow morning, and if you know of any actors on or near the road, I will make it my business to see them."

"Why, what interest have you in sending actors to America?"

"I am manager of the New-York theatre."

Cooke then rose, made a low bow, and begged pardon for sitting in the presence of a manager.

Just as Cooper was leaving him, Cooke said, "Your offers for actors are pretty liberal, and the prospects you hold out pretty good. If it was not so late in the day, I might, perhaps, be tempted to make a voyage to America myself; that is, should you think it worth while to tempt me."

Cooper replied, laughingly, "I'll give you a good engagement—but," (changing his tone,) "I can make no offer that can be an inducement to *you*. As to time of life, that's nothing; you might as easily go to New-York as to London. A voyage to America is now nothing —a hop over the kennel."

Cooke, half joking, but with evident meaning, said, "I don't know as to inducement—I may be induced—I am dissatisfied here, and should not be very difficult."

"If you are serious, and think I may possibly offer any terms worthy of your consideration, I will think on the subject, and make a proposal to you."

Cooke then gravely said, "I am serious, and if you will give me liberal terms I will go. I have no engagement—I have no wish to stay:" and then turning his head round and looking askance, as if addressing a third person, "Quite the contrary."

Mr. Cooper then said to him, "Seeing you are serious, I am very sorry that I am obliged to go to London so immediately; but I will consider the subject thoroughly, and I will likewise see Dickinson, the Boston manager, and know what offers he will make for Boston, and immediately on my arrival in London I will write to you fully on the subject"

Accordingly on the 5th of August, Cooper wrote from London to Mr. Cooke, offering him twenty-five guineas a-week for ten months, to play at New-York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, a benefit at each place, and twenty-five cents a mile for travelling expenses between the above-mentioned cities; his passage over the Atlantic being paid by Mr. Cooper: and referring him for further particulars and information of every kind, relative to the country, to a gentleman from New-York, then residing in Liverpool.

To this letter no answer was ever received. On the 11th of August Mr. Cooke finished his Liverpool engagement, and the same day made an engagement with Mr. Stanton to play a few nights at Preston. Mr. Cooper returning to Liverpool, arrived at Preston in the evening of the fifteenth of August, and saw Cooke's name announced to play Richard the next evening. Resting here this night, he was informed the next morning that Cooke and Stanton had just arrived, and were sitting down to breakfast at the King's Arms. Cooper immediately went to him, and was shown in. He found Cooke gaily intoxicated, and making his breakfast of bottled porter and ham. Nothing passed but laugh and joke, and Cooper left him to go on to his place of destination. Cooke drank all day, and the play was put off in consequence of his indisposition. After playing two nights, he would play no more, and, although he was at that time engaged for Cheltenham, Hereford, and other places, he broke through all, and went off to a little town in Lancashire, on the Irish sea, about sixty miles from Liverpool, called Blackpool. In this obscure place he buried himself till about the ninth of September.

On the tenth of September, Mr. Cooper coming off the stage in the character of Richard, which he was playing to the Liverpool audience, had the stage door opened for him by George Frederick, who was sitting behind the scenes, seeing him act.—Little conversation passed at this time. A man playing Richard the Third has no leisure to talk. Cooper saw no more of him that night, and as he had said that he was going to London next morning, he did not inquire for him next day, but supposed him gone.

About six days afterwards Mr. Banks, deputy manager of the Liverpool theatre, accosted Mr. Cooper with,

"What do you think of your friend Cooke now?"

"*Why?* What now?"

"He is at ——, where he has been ever since he came to town. I have just now sent to his order a second fifty pounds since his arrival. Of three hundred pounds due to him at the end of his last engagement, he took fifty, leaving of course in my hands two hundred and fifty, and this is the second fifty this week. If you have any power over him, get him off to London. He is playing the madman, is frequently very ill, and is robbed at the pleasure of the wretches around him."

Cooper did not choose to interfere, or to visit him in his present abode; but being strengthened in his desire to remove him from his English habits and companions, and transplant him to America, he left Banks, revolving the means by which he should accomplish this object.

He knew that it would not do to engage him in Liverpool, for Cooke would give such publicity to the engagement, that the intention would be defeated by some of the many, whose pleasure or whose interest it was to keep him in England. Cooper, therefore, kept aloof, and employed a person to watch him, that he might know the moment of his departure, follow him, and see him on his way to London, and, if possible, sober.

In the mean time Cooke remained at his infamous abode, sometimes sick, and always insane, till the 28th of September, that is, eighteen days, lost to society and himself, and "playing such pranks before high Heaven," as should make every friend to humanity blush, at least, if not "weep." He had, frequently, spasms occasioned by his intemperance, which were alarming to himself and any person who happened to be with him, and being at this time seized with them very violently, the people of the house thought him dying, and sent for a physician. This gentleman procured him relief, and acquired influence enough over him, to induce a removal.

His usual place of abode being occupied, he took up his residence at a little tavern, back of the Liverpool Theatre. From this place he was to commence his journey to London, and a post-chaise was ordered day after day, which came when ordered, and was sent away again as it came. Mr. Cooke was not ready. The lowest and most profligate of the theatric corps surrounded him, to drink at his expence; and he, ever ready to rush into forgetfulness, was never ready at the appointed time to pursue the plan he had resolved on in the moment of comparative sobriety.

Every time the post-chaise was ordered, Cooper had notice; and every time it drove to Cooke's lodgings, the watchful manager was mounted on horseback to pursue. On the second of October, Cooper saw the post-chaise, for the second time that day, at the tavern door, waiting for Cooke. Having invited a party to dine with him, he wished to ascertain, if possible, the likelihood of Cooke's moving, and there walked into the tavern, where he found this type of intemperance, surrounded by his usual companions, drinking hot punch with them.

Seeing Cooper, he exclaimed, " Ah! my dear boy, here I am, just going—just on the wing—and—" turning away his head in his peculiar manner, " and I have been on the wing for some days, but no flight." Then with a quick change of manner,—" but upon my honour I am going now."

" A pleasant journey to you."

After being obliged to take some punch, Cooper left him, saying aloud, " I shall be in London in the course of a month—Good bye."

He went home to dinner, after ordering his horse to be ready, and placing a man to watch the post-chaise, still expecting that it would, as usual, be driven empty from the door. It proved, however, otherwise. Cooper and his company were scarcely seated at the table, when his scout galloped up with tidings that the post-chaise had driven off with the important object of solicitude in it. Cooke was actually on the road to London. An apology being made, the host left his guests, and mounting his horse, rode out of Liverpool by another road, a little after five o'clock, and coming into the great London road about three miles from town, saw Cooke's post-chaise ahead.

Mr. Cooper now thought his object within his reach, and all difficulties removed. He concluded that Cooke, having become sufficiently rational to begin a journey of serious import, might, by address, be prevented from recurring to the bottle, and be brought to a state befitting an object of so much consequence as quitting the kingdom, and crossing the Atlantic. He rode on to overtake the post-chaise, intending to ride by his side to the next town, then to get in, and ride with him, and enter into the business of the proposed voyage. Just as he was on the point of overtaking the chaise, it stopped, and out jumped Cooke—Cooper had stopped his horse, and now perceived a decent elderly woman walking by the road side. Cooke approached, and spoke to her, and then led her to the post-chaise, and got in. Cooper beholding in this something like an obstacle thrown in his way, and all alive with fear, and anxiety, rode up and accosted him.

Nothing worth note passed till they arrived at the end of the first stage. Cooper dismounted and Cooke alighted, leaving his companion in the chaise.

"Who have you got in the chaise with you?"

"I don't know; the poor woman seemed tired, and on inquiry I found she had some miles further to walk; so I asked her to take a seat."

"As you never answered my letter, I suppose you have given up all thought of America."

"No, that I have not."

"Then I suppose my offer is not sufficient."

"Quite sufficient."

"Why then not write an answer to my proposal?"

"Because I thought I should see you, and talk the matter over with you; but you are all the time on horseback or in a post-chaise; here to-day, there to-morrow, and next day no one knows where—one might as well try to catch will-o'-the-wisp; you may be seen but 'tis always moving."

"Well, here I am, and here you have me. Now tell me, will you accept my proposal for America?"

"I will."

"And you will go?"

"I will."

"When?"

"With you, as soon as you please. I am free to go when you please, and the sooner the better. I have no engagement, and only wish to go up to London to settle some business, play one night more for them, then bid a long adieu to black Jack, and all the rest of them."

The post-boy came in with "The lady in the chaise asks if you are not coming, Sir?"

"Aye, aye, directly."

"Tell the lady the gentleman is busy. If you do seriously intend going to America, and the offer contents you—"

"It does—I do."

"Then, now is the time—if you go to London, you will not go to America. If you even go to Liverpool, you will not go to America. There will be such opposition to the measure, and such persuasions, that you will be forced to yield. The plan once made public is defeated. Therefore—"

"The lady says if you are not going on, Sir, she will get out and walk."

"I'll be with her directly."

"If you have made up your mind to cross the Atlantic—"

"I tell you I have."

"Well, then, there is but one mode; your intention must not be known until you have sailed—"

"Well, but how—"

"Get into the post-chaise with the old lady, put her down where she wishes, drive on towards London a stage or two, I will join you, and we will drive back in the evening to a friend's house in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, where you shall stay the night; I will go on and engage your passage, watch the sailing of the vessel, drive you down to the place of embarkation when all is ready, and you are off without noise, or any of the disagreeables attending a departure to a foreign country."

Cooke was pleased with the plan, determined to pursue it, and drove off with the impatient old lady in the post-chaise. Cooper knew the necessity of his presence to enforce the resolution and give effect to the plan; for an accidental rencontre at the next inn, or almost any other accident, might induce an application to the bottle, and then whether our hero should go to London or to New York, to North Wales or North America, would depend on circumstances, whose concatenation no metaphysician could perceive, or on chances which no mathematician could calculate.

Fully impressed with the danger of delay, and resolved to be at Prescot, the next stage, before the post-chaise, Cooper ordered his horse. The horse was brought, but so lame as to be unfit for use. No horse was to be procured—no expedient could be thought of; the minutes flew—the post-chaise was out of sight—and fear said to imagination, " it's all over—Cooke's gone." Just at this critical moment up drove a stage-coach, without passengers, on its way to Manchester.

" Can I have a place to Prescot?"

" Yes, Sir."

" Well then, let's be off."

" Must stop to water," says the coachman, very deliberately proceeding with his business.

" I'll give you a crown if you beat a post-chaise into Prescot that has just started."

" Why, I don't know how that may be, because I don't know how long it has been off, and how far it be got—"

" I'll give you the crown if you'll try."

" That I will, Sir;" and he quickened his movements accordingly.

Cooper went into the house to wile away the anxious minutes of delay, and having given the necessary time, returned and found his coachman engaged in the purchase of a living pig, and all other considerations lost to his mind, but those of higgling with the farmer to abate the price. The manager looked at the pig, and the ideas of a ship the next day to sail for America—Cooke on the way to Prescot—the many accidents that might carry him on the road so far before he could be overtaken as to make the enterprize fail—all rushed upon him. Never pig's face spoke more eloquently. Cooper asked the price, and paid the money for the pig, and then throwing his purchase into the basket of the coach, ordered the man to drive on or give up all thoughts of the crown.

The coachman, ambitious of a crown, had as little feeling for his horses, as other ambitious drivers have for the hacks, who carry them through their dirty ways to riches or power, and the chaise was overtaken as it was dragged up the hill to the "Legs of Man," at Prescot, and triumphantly passed.

Cooper ordered the coach to stop, and having rewarded the driver, got out about twenty yards from the inn, leaving the coachman master of the disputed pig. During this the chaise passed the pursuer, who running to the back of the house, ordered a post-chaise for Warrington, in hopes that Cooke might be driven off, before the return of the chaise, which brought him to Prescot, and the post-boy return with the information to Liverpool, of his being on his way to London. Entering the back door of the inn, he met Cooke advancing from the front, who after many exclamations of surprize at his being before him, ordered something to drink. Cooper asked for a room, and immediately after they had been shown into one, he slipt away and gave directions for making the liquor very weak, and then returned to renew the subject of the projected return towards Liverpool.

The place where the American manager intended to deposit his enlisted actor for the night, was about five miles from Liverpool, at the house of Mr. Tawbuck, with whom, though but slightly acquainted from recent introduction, and two or three dinner meetings, he had made up his mind to take the liberty of requesting an asylum for Cooke, until the ship for New York was ready to weigh anchor. The chaise which had been ordered for Warrington, but was intended for Mr. Tawbuck's, was now waiting at the door. The plan had again been talked over, and again settled ; and the liquor that had been ordered was just finished ; when in came two Liverpool men who were returning home from Warrington, and hearing that the great Mr. Cooke was in the house, they must see him. Cooke, it must be remembered, had been increasing his quantity of stimulus all day, though very moderately. The Liverpool men, merchants or traders, on entering, order a bottle of wine, and introduce themselves to Cooke by flattering him on his celebrity, excusing the liberty they took, from their great desire to see him; he very pleasantly and politely joins them in conversation, and all symptoms of departure vanish.

To Mr. Cooper, this was an unexpected stroke. He saw all his hopes again in jeopardy. He chafed at the intrusion of strangers upon their privacy. He cursed their impudence and Cooke's folly. If no other ill consequence arose from the rencontre, he knew these men would report in Liverpool, the circumstance of his being on the road with Cooke; for they knew both as actors, and addressed them by name. He walked the room in irritated contemplation of the passing scene, while Cooke swallowed the wine and the flattery of his new friends. He became loquacious, told them he was going to London, and seemed with difficulty to withhold from them the secret of his intended voyage to America. They lamented his departure from Liverpool, pressed him very much to return with them, and at length, one of them, whom I shall call Mr. A., invited the hero to dine with him the next day.

Cooke would doubtless have accepted the invitation, as the wine began to operate on his brain, but Cooper luckily found an opportunity of speaking to him unheard by the strangers, and to observe, among other things tending to the same point, how much these friends of his must have wanted to see him, and be attentive to him, since he had been months in Liverpool, as much unnoticed by the inhabitants as if he had been in Africa; where he would only have been stared at, as a thing to gratify curiosity.—" You must be very much obliged to this friend of yours, Mr. A., for his frequent calls upon you in Liverpool." This changed the current of Cooke's ideas, and he soon began an ironical speech of compliment to Mr. A., concluding with—" Yet with all this high respect for me and my talents, you never came near me when at Liverpool, but now that I am on my way to London you ask me to go back and dine, and be damn'd to you!"

Even this did not break up the party, and after apologies, Cooke still continued to drink; and Cooper being invited by Mr. B. to join, rudely refused and left the room. In an agony of impatience, he soon sent a message that " Mr. Cooke's post chaise is ready."

This message had no effect but to produce one in return from Cooke, requesting Mr. Cooper to come to him. This he complied with; and Mr. A. having, meanwhile, left the room, and Mr. B. being at some distance, the opportunity was seized of endeavouring to rouze Cooke's indignation against his companions on the ground of their intrusion.

"What right had these fellows to come into a room we had ordered? Do you think they would have dared to intrude upon others thus? No. But they think any liberty may be taken with an actor." Cooke, full of indignation and port-wine-valour, rings for the waiter and begins to abuse him, and through him the men whose wine he had just finished. Mr. B. said nothing, but going out returned instantly with Mr. A., and both sit down most peremptorily with their hats on, in defiance. Seeing this, Cooper says aloud,

"As I observed, Mr. Cooke, it is insufferably impertinent to be thus intruded upon."

"If you mean me, Sir, this is the traveller's room, and I have as much right here as you, or any man."

Cooper now rang in the waiter, and on inquiry found that he had shown them into the room free to all travellers. There was nothing to be done but damn the waiter and make a cold awkward apology to Messrs. A. and B. For some moments a sullen silence. Messrs. A., B., and C., walk the room, Cooke sitting by the table.

"It appears," says Cooper, "from what the waiter says, that he showed you into another room, and that you came into this on being told we were here; you must have seen that you interrupted conversation, and as your entrance was from impertinent curiosity, so your continuance is an unmannerly intrusion."

This outrageous speech did not produce that striking effect which might have been expected, but smothered fire glowed in the breasts of all the party. Mr. A. paced the room—Cooper sat with his hat on upon a corner of the table—Mr. B. placed himself with his hat on at the table opposite Cooke, who, encouraged by the passive courage with which the Liverpool men had received his friend Tom's speech, assumed the hero, and Mr. B. having addressed him; he in his sharp discordant tone cries out,

"Do you know, Sir, who you are speaking to?"

"Yes," says B. very composedly.

"Then, Sir, I would have you know that no man with his hat on talks to George Frederick Cooke!"

With the same sturdy indifference the other replied, "Yet I talk to you with my hat on, and shall continue to do so."

Here the hero was in a dilemma; and must either go forward by knocking off his adversary's hat, which he knew would procure himself a beating, or back out and save his skin, which did not appear very easy, without giving up his assumed heroics very scurvily.

In this distressing quandary his eye sought Cooper, and happily espied the hat on his head; he then, putting his hand above his eyes as if to assist his sight, and looking at Cooper, cries,

"Tom, have you got your hat on?"

"Yes."

"Ah, then all's very well; it's all very well if Tom has got his hat on."

Mr. A. had again left the room, and Cooper after some time took B. aside, and represented to him the importance of his being left alone with Cooke, who being in a state of intoxication, it was necessary to control, and who would not submit to control in the presence of strangers. B. who, like another traveller, only wrapped the cloak more obstinately round him when the storm threatened, yielded to fair weather, threw his displeasure off, and retired.

Every obstacle removed, Cooke consents to depart, and with the assistance of the waiter is led to the post chaise and seated.—Cooper follows; and having him once more on the way to America, orders the post boy to drive to Warrington. They accordingly drive off, but are no sooner out of Prescot, but the order is countermanded, and avoiding the town, they make all speed towards Liverpool.

CHAP. XXV.

Arrival at Mr. Tawbuck's—Cooke left there —Scene between Him and his Host—passes the next Day and Night at Mr. Tawbuck's House —Embarks for America, October the 4th, 1810*—Mr. Cook's Letter to Mr. Harris— Mr. Cooper's Letter—Custom-house Officer— Mr. Cook's Emigration in Danger of being stopped—Difficulty overcome—He arrives at New-York on the* 16*th of November*, 1810.

It was now between nine and ten o'clock. Cooke, after some incoherent questions, yields to the effect produced by the motion of the carriage and the fumes of the liquor, and sinks to drowsy insensibility; leaving his companion to revolve in his anxious mind the many things to be done before one o'clock the next day, to ensure the success of his project. Cooke must be deposited safely at Mr. Tawbuck's, and left there to get sober; a passage must be engaged in the ship which was to sail at the above-mentioned time; and all preparations for a voyage made; when Cooke should be sober, an engagement before a witness must be concluded—and all this in a few hours. Cooke roused himself, and inquired where they were going. With some difficulty he was made to comprehend that he was not on his way to London, but going back to the vicinity of Liverpool, and all the why's and the wherefore's belonging to the plan of embarkation. He now objected to going to Mr. Tawbuck's—alluded to his present condition—the indelicacy of intruding upon a gentleman and a stranger at that time of the night—he wished to go directly to Liverpool. His objections were over-ruled, and repeated and over-ruled again, and shortly after 10 o'clock they arrived at the gate of Mr. Tawbuck.

Though Cooper had had time to ruminate upon the liberty he was about to take with Mr. Tawbuck, he could not but feel all the objections to the measure in full force, when the post-chaise stopped; however, he felt that he could not retract without forfeiting the stake he played for, and he leaped from the carriage, and ran to the house to apologize and explain before Cooke should be seen. Cooper knocked: a servant came.

"Is Mr. Tawbuck at home?"

"No, Sir."

This, though a circumstance very likely to happen, was altogether unexpected. What was to be done?

"Where is Mr. Tawbuck?"

"At a neighbour's about half a mile off, Sir."

The resolution was formed to send the servant for his master, and take possession in the mean time of his house.

"I'll thank you to go to Mr. Tawbuck, and say that Mr. Cooper wishes to see him on very particular business."

The servant went, and Cooper assisted Cooke out of the post-chaise, and into the house, where the first thing was a demand for wine. Mr. Cooper had talked of his friend Tawbuck's excellent Madeira, and being put in mind of it, felt himself obliged to go still further in the liberties he was taking, and ordered a bottle of wine. While he exerted himself to prevent Cooke's drinking, he was endeavouring to devise means of letting Mr. Tawbuck know Cooke's situation, and making the necessary apologies without Cooke's hearing him; this he knew could not be done in the house; for, unfortunately, Mr. Tawbuck was deaf, and to make him hear, it was necessary to speak so loud, that any person within the walls could hear also. To avoid this, the servant girl was ordered to give notice of her master's approach; this soon happened, and Cooper met him in the court-yard, and in a few words told him, that he had brought Cooke, although in a state of ebriety, to stay at his house that night; that he begged him to excuse the liberty, and wait for the explanation of the motives which could induce him to take such a step, until next morning. The answer was the most polite that could be: an assurance of welcome, of pleasure in having Mr. Cooke under his roof, of his desire of knowing, personally, so eccentric a man, and a prohibition of all further explanation at any time.

They entered, and Mr. Tawbuck being introduced to Mr. Cooke, received him with true hospitality and genuine politeness. The presence of a stranger had the effect of rousing Cooke; he in some measure recovered his faculties, and exerted them to please his host. A glass of wine must be drank round, and that finished the first bottle, and notwithstanding every sign Cooper could make, Tawbuck ordered a second.

Seeing this, and knowing no remedy to the evil, Cooper determined to leave them. He then, reminding Cooke that Tawbuck was deaf, and could not overhear what was said, told him in an under tone, that as many preparations were to be made for his comfort on the voyage, a bed and a variety of articles to be purchased, he must leave him and go to Liverpool: but that he would be with him next morning with a carriage to take him directly to the ship. While going to the chaise he charges Tawbuck not to let any body have access to Cooke during his absence. Of his leaving the place there was no fear; wine was before him within the house, darkness was without, and no mode of conveyance, even if he wished it, could be procured.

Messrs. Tawbuck and Cooke were thus left over the bottle, and the latter drank and talked incessantly; Tawbuck now and then having to remind him of his deafness by "I am hard of hearing, Mr. Cooke." Cooke was "too far gone" to remember this above a minute, and would then sink his voice to an under tone, till at length finding no responses from his companion, he would burst out in his sharp theatrical voice, "Why don't you answer?" This, and this alone, Tawbuck could hear, and the reply was still "I am hard of hearing, Mr. Cooke." Cooke then began in a high tone to tell of his intended voyage, adding that it was not the first time he had been in America—he had served his royal master against the rebels in every part of the continent; and then went into a detail of battles, and skirmishes, soon sinking far below Tawbuck's hearing point, who, of course, finding attention useless, suffered it to flag, and the narrator finding himself unattended to, exclaims in his harsh upper voice, "Why, damme, I might as well talk to a post!"

It being one o'clock, and Mr. Tawbuck heartily tired of his guest, he made a proposal for their both retiring to bed. No; Cooke wanted another bottle.—To this Mr. Tawbuck chose to turn a deaf ear, and finding him determined to sit, retired. Being left to himself, Cooke fell into one of those reveries which ebriety encourages, and imagining himself in an inn, he began to roar for the waiter. The servant came.

"Where's the landlord?"

"My master is going to bed, Sir."

"Send him to me, Sir!"

"He is going to bed, Sir."

"I say, Sir, send him to me!"

The man went to Mr. Tawbuck, who was undressing for bed, and telling what had passed, he very good-naturedly went to his troublesome guest.

"Landlord, bring me another bottle of wine!"

"No more, Mr. Cooke."

"A pretty answer to a gentleman! damme if ever I stop at your house again—get out of the room, Sir! and send boot-catch to me! d'ye hear!"

Mr. Tawbuck retired, and sent the male servant. "So, Sir, you are Boots, are you? well, Sir, why don't you take off my boots?—So—now send the chambermaid." Thus, under the impression of being in an inn, and with all the noise and perversity attending upon his condition, he at length was tumbled into bed.

In the mean time Mr. Cooper went to Liverpool; and the next morning made the necessary purchases for the traveller's accommodation, and sent them to the ship. He then saw the Captain, and was told that he should not sail that day, as was intended, but positively on the next day at two o'clock. This was joyful tidings. There was now time for Cooke to recover his senses, which Cooper had reason to believe would be turned adrift the last night, from the situation in which he had left him, and his known propensities, and he could then soberly make his election before Mr. Tawbuck, either to ratify or annul the agreement, without that hurry which would have attended the business, if all had been to be concluded, and the embarkation made, in the course of a few hours, as would have been necessary according to the first appointed time.

Mr. Cooper dispatched his servant on horseback, with a present of game, to Mr. Tawbuck, and a message that he would soon join him and Mr. Cooke. Then having at leisure completed his preparations for Cooke's comfortable accommodation on ship-board, he took post-chaise, and followed. When arrived, Mr. Tawbuck informed him, laughing, of his troubles of the preceding night, and that Cooke had slept until eleven that morning, at which time he rang for the servant. When the servant first went in to him, he did not know where he was, but on being told, asked for Mr. Cooper, and then expressed his fears that he had misbehaved the last night. Having drank very freely of water, he slept again, and still continued sleeping. Mr. Cooper went up to him, and he awoke quite refreshed, and immediately mentioned his intended voyage. On being told that the ship was not to sail that day, Cooke expressed his pleasure, as he should not be hurried.

Mr. Tawbuck came in to inquire after his guest, and Mr. Cooper took the opportunity of mentioning Mr. Cooke's intended voyage, and that the time of sailing was put off until the next day. An invitation was given, and accepted by Mr. Cooke, to remain at Mr. Tawbuck's until the ship should sail. Mr. Cooper gave Mr. Tawbuck an account of the transactions of yesterday, and Mr. Cooke's reasons for not making his embarkation public; telling Mr. Cooke at the same time, that he wished Mr. Tawbuck to know the facts, and to hear them in the presence of Mr. Cooke, that he might have it in his power to contradict any reports which might be fabricated after his departure. Cooke entered into his views, confirmed his statement, and asserted, that he had no reason to make his departure a secret, but to avoid the importunities of his friends—that he had no engagement—and owed nothing in England, excepting a small sum in London, which Mr. Cooper had his instructions to see settled, and had undertaken so to do. Mr. Cooper then recapitulated the terms of the engagement for America, and asked,

"Is that right?"

"Yes. I have your proposal in a letter of the 5th of August, there in that travelling trunk."

"And that is the proposal which you accept."

"Yes."

After this, and other similar conversation, Mr. Cooper took his leave, telling Mr. Cooke that he would return to Liverpool, make further purchases of articles, which his experience of the Atlantic pointed out as being comfortable, and would return to dinner. The dinner hour being fixed for six, he departed.

During this day, the third of October, Mr. Cooke remained at Mr. Tawbuck's, and behaved with the utmost propriety, exhibiting in every thing his better self.

Mr. Cooper having finished the business of the day, at Liverpool, returned at the appointed hour to dinner. Cooke gaily took his glass, and the wine again circulated freely till the veteran himself made the motion for retiring by saying, "now for good night;" and, after drinking, turned down his glass, and then retired, mellow, but without any symptoms of madness, to bed.

Cooper returned to Liverpool, and early next morning received a message from the Captain of the ship, that the wind being favourable, he could save a tide by weighing anchor at eleven; and that he should sail at that hour instead of two, as before appointed. A coach and four horses were instantly ordered, and Cooper in full speed drives out to Tawbuck's. Cooke, who was still asleep, is aroused—takes a breakfast of cold ham and cider, and away they dash, Manager and Actor—coach and four—for the place of embarkation, at Liverpool. They avoided the town, and found, as had been ordered, a barge and four oars waiting for them. On their alighting from the coach, Mr. Cooper thus addressed himself to his companion,

"Now, here is the barge to carry you to the ship—there is the coach and four which brought us, and which will carry you to Warrington in a few hours. Nobody knows of your intention to go to America, or of any transaction connected with it, but ourselves and Tawbuck, and I pledge myself for his secrecy—if you repent, return, and it shall never be known that a thought of leaving the country ever entered your head."

Cooke persisted in his intention of going, and they were rowed on board the Columbia, Captain Hazard, and immediately the ship sailed for sea, Cooper returning to Liverpool, lightened of all his present care.

Such is the detail of a transaction, which, as Mr. Cooper foresaw, has been severely animadverted upon in England, but which I believe is now presented to the public without disguise, and certainly was narrated by Mr. Cooper with an air of frankness, which, together with his character, leaves no doubt upon the mind of the writer.

That Mr. Cooke was engaged to Mr. Harris at the time he embarked for America, is certain; but it is equally certain, that Mr. Cooper did not know of such engagement. Mr. Cooke at the time declared himself unengaged and perfectly free, and persisted in the assertion after his arrival in America. I speak from my own knowledge. The following letter, written immediately after his removal to the tavern opposite to the back door of the theatre, Liverpool, dated September 30th, was never mentioned to Mr. Cooper; and when it was published and Cooke saw it in America, he acknowledged it, and for the first time acknowledged his engagement to Mr. Harris, making no other comment or excuse, but that he had forgot it. This is the letter.

To Henry Harris, Esq. Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.
Liverpool, Sept. 30th.

"My dear Sir,

"This morning I received yours of the 20th. Part of my luggage has been in town I hope this month past. I have not appeared on any stage since the 7th. From the night I finished my engagement in this town, Tuesday, the 14th of August, I have only acted five nights. I have been under medical care the greatest part of the time since I returned here, and indeed it was for that purpose I came. Munden, who is recovering from a very severe fit of the gout, requested me to stay a day or two for him. I have done so, and yesterday I paid for both our places on Tuesday morning next, (Sunday coaches being all engaged, and not one going on Monday, the Mail excepted.) On Wednesday evening we shall, I trust, reach the Golden Cross.

"I remain, my dear Sir,
Your most obedient,
G. F. Cooke."

Mr. Cooper wrote the following letter for publication—it explains its cause and its intent.

"Sir, "*Liverpool, October, 7th.*

"I have been fortunate in engaging Mr.

George Cooke, of Covent Garden theatre, to play under my direction in America, and on Thursday last he sailed from this port to New-York. The reason of my troubling you with this letter is, that an absurd and calumnious report has obtained in Liverpool, (owing, I presume, to the negotiations having been carried on with secrecy, and his intentions not having been known until he had actually departed,) that I had prevailed with Mr. Cooke to quit England, when he was prevented by ebriety from exerting his judgment and free will upon the occasion. It is possible that this slander may reach London; and, as Mr. Cooke is an object of considerable public interest, may find its way into the journals. I assure you, on my word of honour, that this is an absolute falsehood; that the negotiation for the engagement under which Mr. Cooke has embarked, was commenced about the 6th of August last, and was completed on the third instant, in the moment of perfect sobriety, and entire understanding of all the arrangements: the secrecy that attended the mode of embarkation, was only to prevent the solicitation of his friends in Liverpool, which might distress him, and which he determined to avoid, as he was resolved upon the step he was about to take. My object is to request, that, if such falsehoods as I have hinted at, should find their way into the

London papers, you will have the goodness to dedicate a portion of your paper to the denial of the allegation. Requesting you will pardon the intrusion, I am, &c.

"THOMAS A. COOPER."

The amazing wit and wondrous severity displayed by the English periodical prints on this occasion, particularly by the well-informed and intelligent editor of the Monthly Mirror, passes imagination. Cooper and Cooke were found equally guilty, but it was agreed that to visit America was punishment sufficient for any crime. "They are both transported, and let justice be satisfied."

This voyage threw some rays of splendour over the last years of the veteran actor, and probably lengthened his life more than any circumstance likely to have happened in his native country; for those habits which produced disease, and that disease which terminated his existence, were fixed before he left England, and their effects were suspended by the new motives, which arose to call forth his better energies in another hemisphere.

On the fourth of October, 1810, George Frederick Cooke embarked on board the ship Columbia, Capt. Joshua Hazard, for New-York.

Mr. Cooper had previously made shipment of two precious commodities for the American market, a Mr. Doige, who was to be principal low comedian, and Mr. Smalley, a little great singer, who had been brought out in London some years before, at Covent Garden, as Master Smalley, and was probably one among the wonders of the time, a young Orpheus, or infant Incledon. As I shall probably never again mention these worthies, I will here record their fate—the first, Doige, died of a dropsy, and Master Smalley was bribed by the managers to break his article, and run away from them.

Soon after Cooke came on board, another Thespian appeared, coming from the Chester side, and Mr. M'Farland mounted the deck, having determined suddenly to travel for the benefit of his health and fortunes.

His travels, and those of George Frederick, had like to have been speedily terminated: for scarcely had Cooper left the ship, when she was boarded by a revenue officer, who demanded of the passengers their names, and the places of their birth. This complied with, he then asked to see the Captain's papers, and, after examination, declared that the names of Messrs. Cooke and M'Farland were not entered at the Custom-House, and that they must therefore get into the boat, and return to Liverpool.

In this dilemma they went down into the cabin, and consulted the Captain, and the hint was suggested by some one of the company, that the difficulty might be removed, and the opinion of the officer changed, by a reasonably weighty argument, impressed with the sanction of his royal master's countenance.

The officer, who doubtless expected some ingenious opposition to his order, sent one of his attendants to remind the gentlemen that he waited for them. M'Farland, who was without the species of eloquence required, begged of Cooke to speak for both; who accordingly, without preface, presented his reasons for not going ashore, in the shape of a guinea. The underling shook his head—scratched it—and shook it again.

"O, no, master, this won't do."

"Won't do? How so?"

"What, only one?—O, no, that won't do."

"Well there—there's another."

"Why, aye—but t'other gentleman?"

"That's for both."

"Won't do.—What!—we know the gentleman—consider—the risk—O, no."

Cooke, cursing the fellow, added another guinea, which the officer's officer received, with the others, as their passport, and returning to his superior, the boat put off to the shore, to report that all was well, and the passengers cleared according to established form.

Cooke who had been under the influence of a high toned course of stimulants for some time past, felt the necessity of a farewell glass to the white cliffs of Albion, and the first day was closed by a quarrel with the Captain, who was obliged to threaten violence before his troublesome inmate could be induced to go to his *birth* for the night.

Dissatisfaction and mad intemperance always went hand in hand with George Frederick; and this state of body and mind now continued, until the intemperance was stopped by sickness, and the dissatisfaction proportionably augmented by the same cause.

He vented his complaints in no way pleasant strains on all around him; he cursed his voyage, himself, and Cooper; and every roll of the ship was accompanied by his impatient exclamations of regret at having left his native shores, and reproaches alternately applied to himself and his friend Tom.

Sickness at length ceased to torment him; and fortunately, during his illness, his companions had drank up every drop of porter, wine, brandy, and in short, every thing stronger than water, that the ship had been provided with. The fare of the table was exceeding plain, and there was nothing for the glass but Thames-water, undergoing its purgation. Cooke now enjoyed the providence of Cooper, who had supplied him with some bottles of essence of lemon, which made him a pleasant beverage.

Books, such as he most liked, had been provided for the amusement of his tedious confinement. His appetite, which was ordinarily very poor, now became excellent, his strength was perfectly repaired, and after a fortnight of this wholesome privation, he arrived at New-York, in better health than he had enjoyed for years. His body and his mind were restored to apparent sanity, and he was prepared to enter upon a new state of existence, in a new world; nothing was wanting but common prudence to have retrieved all his errors, and made him, as a man, worthy of his high gifts as an actor.

Nothing more favourable to the breaking up the old train of images and habits, which degraded this extraordinary man, can be conceived, than, being thus removed from all the haunts of his former idleness, or weakness, and introduced among a people, who, in the splendour of his reputation, as an actor, sunk the stories which tell-tale fame had spread of the man; and, who were willing to receive him with every respect and honour due to his uncommon talents.

There are instances on record, of persons who, after experiencing the evils proceeding from excess, and having become so much the slaves of habit, as to be unable to trust themselves with a single stimulating drop, have resolved to refrain altogether, and have triumphantly kept their resolves. Every one can do so.

If George Frederick Cooke, after experiencing the good effects, which he always acknowledged, of fourteen days' abstinence, had made and held to such a resolution, what a noble triumph he would have afforded to the friends of rare and exalted genius!

CHAP. XXVI.

Cooke's Arrival in America—Plays Richard on the 21st November, 1810—His Account of his Reception at New York—Sir Pertinax—Shylock—Remarks—Glenalvon—Sir Archy—Zanga—Plays Sir Giles Overreach—Remarks—Falstaff—Remarks and Comparison between Cooke and Falstaff—Shameful Exhibition on the Night of his Benefit—Cato—Embarks for Boston.

I HAVE now arrived at that period which introduced George Frederick Cooke upon the shores and the stage of the western hemisphere. In the fifty-fifth year of his age, he visited a new world, to which his fame had been wafted before him, and where his presence caused a greater sensation than had been produced by the arrival of any individual, not connected with the political welfare of the country.

When Mr. Cooper's letter arrived announcing the engagement, his partner in the theatrical property could scarcely realize it. The season had a gloomy aspect, the company was comparatively poor, and the receipts scanty; but,

> " Now was the winter of our discontent
> " Made glorious summer by the sun of York."

A pilot boat had been procured, and the manager, with some other gentlemen, went down to Sandy Hook, and cruized a day and night in hopes of meeting the ship, and bringing up her precious freight. They however returned without the prize.

At length the great man arrived, and landed in New York, on the evening of the sixteenth of November, 1810.

The report of his engagement was not generally believed. It appeared as impossible to many, that the great London actor should be removed to America, as that St. Paul's Cathedral should be transported across the Atlantic. Englishmen in New York swore roundly that it could not be. It was some other performer of the same name; it was even insinuated that the whole was an imposition—" *Cooke* come to America! pooh!"

However, Cooke had come to America, had landed in New York, and was seated *tête-a-tête* with the manager, in a snug room at the Tontine Coffee-house, over a bottle of Madeira.

On the evening of the 16th of November, receiving a note with the information of Cooke's arrival, and a request to come to the Tontine Coffee-house, I went, and found the veteran of the sock and buskin seated with Mr. Price, as above described. On my introduction to him, he received me with all the politeness of the old school, and the first ceremonies over, I could not but admire his appearance, as well as his manner, so opposite to the idea I had formed of him, in consequence of hearing the many anecdotes circulated among theatrical people, of his rudeness and intemperance.

He looked older than men I had been used to seeing of his age, but vigorous and healthful. The neatness of his dress, his sober suit of grey, his powdered grey hairs, and suavity of address, gave no indication of the eccentric being, whose weaknesses had been the theme of the English fugitive publications; nor could the strictest examination detect any of those marks with which the votaries of intemperance, falsely called pleasure, are so universally stigmatized. Mr. Price has since mentioned to me, that on opening the door of the room in which he had been informed that Mr. Cooke awaited him, and seeing a man so different from the image his imagination had formed of Cooke, the eccentric, wild, and depraved Cooke, he shut the door, and returned to the bar of the coffee-house, to inquire if they had not directed him to a wrong apartment.

After his pint of wine, Mr. Cooke went to the theatre. It was soon rumoured that "Cooke was in the boxes," and the players on the stage were left unattended to. He passed through the private door to the manager's room, and then retired to the Tontine Coffee-house for the night.

The next day he dined with the manager, *tête-a-tête;* and when I saw him on the morning of the 18th, he was in bed at eleven. He laughed, and turning away his head with his peculiarly arch look, said,

"Cooper gave me a great many cautions, when I left him, but he forgot to caution me against his partner."

A few days after this, Mr. Price invited a large party to meet Cooke at his house, and the veteran conducted himself with great propriety; but, as usual, sat them all out, and continued when left with his host to drink, and utter his political opinions, not the more luminous for his "potations pottle deep." Finding that he was immoveable, and nearly insensible, about twelve o'clock Mr. Price, stationing a servant in the room, left him repeating, as he had done over and over before, " What can France promise you, that England cannot guarantee to you ?"

Mr. Price went to bed, and waking about six in the morning, slipt on his clothes and went down to the dining room, where he found Cooke in the same spot, who lifting his head, began again, " What can France promise you, that England cannot guarantee to you ?" and with difficulty he could be prevailed upon to give up politics and retire, after a sitting of fifteen hours.

On Wednesday, the twenty-first of November, he made his first appearance on the American stage, in the character of Richard the Third.

The throng at the avenues was unexampled ; the press violent and dangerous ; many in the confusion, without wishing it, were forced through the doors, and no payments received for them. Many ladies were taken round to the back door of the theatre, in Theatre Alley, and introduced to the boxes from behind the curtain. The confusion was very great, but it was caused principally by a want of foresight ; the inconvenience of the entrance to the boxes never having been made manifest before by any great press upon the house.

I regret, now, that I did not, when I had ample opportunity, note every passage of every character this great actor played, and describe minutely the manner, and the tone, the movement of the arm, the hand, nay, even the finger, corresponding to each expression of the mind on his face—I regret it, but perhaps the reader may have cause of congratulation that he is spared such minute criticism.

On Mr. Cooke's appearance this evening, the burst of welcome was such as may be imagined to come from 2,200 people assembled to greet him with the warmest expression of their satisfaction on his arrival. He entered on the right hand of the audience, and with a dignified erect deportment walked to the centre of the stage amidst their plaudits. His appearance was picturesque, and proudly noble. His head elevated, his step firm, his eye beaming fire. I saw no vestige of the venerable grey haired old gentleman I had been introduced to at the coffee-house; and the utmost effort of imagination could not have reconciled the figure I now saw, with that of imbecility and intemperance.

He returned the salutes of the audience, not as a player to the public, on whom he depended, but as a victorious prince, acknowledging the acclamations of the populace on his return from a successful campaign—as Richard Duke of Gloster, the most valiant branch of the triumphant house of York.

When he spoke,

"Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by the sun of York,
And all the clouds that lowered upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried;
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
Our stern alarums, &c."

The high key in which he pitched his voice, and its sharp and rather grating tones, caused a sensation of disappointment in some, and a fear in others, that such tones could not be modulated to the various cadences of nature, or such a voice have compass for the varied expression of harmonious diction and distracting passion, which the characters of Shakspeare require; but disappointment and fear vanished, and conviction and admiration succeeded, and increased to the dropping of the curtain; when reiterated plaudits expressed the fulness with which expectation had been realized, and taste and feeling gratified.

Previous to his going on, Mr. Cooke's agitation was extreme. He trembled like an untried candidate who had never faced an audience; and he has afterwards said, feelingly, that the idea of appearing before a new people, and in a new world, at his advanced time of life, agitated him even more than his first appearance before that London audience which was to decide his fate.

There were on this occasion received, eighteen hundred and twenty dollars. The amount would have been more, but for the confusion before mentioned. There were 1,358 persons accounted for in the boxes.

The following short memoir, written by Mr. Cooke soon after his arrival, evinces the impression made upon him by his reception in the New World.

"On Thursday afternoon, October the 4th, 1810, embarked, at Liverpool, on board the Columbia, of and for New York, North America, and sailed out of the harbour immediately. The master of the ship, (about 300 tons,) Joshua Hazard, of Rhode Island. On Monday the 8th, cleared St. George's Channel, and on Friday evening, November the 16th, landed at New York, after a tedious and tempestuous passage.

Two gentlemen came on board, and conducted me to the Tontine Coffee-house, where I was soon joined by Mr. Price, joint manager of the theatre in New York, with Mr. Cooper, who took leave of me on board the day I sailed, from Liverpool. I accompanied him to the theatre, and afterwards returned with him to the Coffee-house. Mr. P. introduced me to

Mr. Dunlap, a gentleman also connected with the theatre. Supped with Mr. P. at the coffee-house, and slept there ; next day accompanied Mr. P. to the custom-house, where, upon paying 20 cents, I obtained a permit to land my baggage. A cent is the 100th part of a dollar, and something more than the English halfpenny. —Walked about the city, and dined at Mr. Price's house, 296, Broadway. The evening I landed presented Mr. P. with an open note from Mr. Cooper, and also an order from Mr. C. for 194 dollars, and $\frac{22}{100}$, as value for English bank notes paid to Mr. C. (or exchanged,) in England, also with a letter from Mr. Cooper, addressed to me, and dated London, August the 5th, 1810. Slept at Mr. P.'s house ; next day, (Sunday,) took a long walk in and about the city with Mr. P. ; dined at his house, and returned at night to the coffee-house, much indisposed. Remained in my apartment until Wednesday morning, the 21st, when I went with Mr. P. to the theatre, and rehearsed Richard III. Attended the two days before by Dr. M‘Clean, one of the gentlemen to whom I was introduced at Mr. P.'s ; was also visited by some other gentlemen, among whom was Master Payne, the *American Roscius*. I thought him a polite sensible youth, and the reverse of *our* Young Roscius. Promised to accompany him to his father's, a short distance from town, on Thursday evening at six, where I was also to be introduced to Mr. Fennell, an actor of celebrity, and whom I once met, above twenty years ago, at Newcastle upon Tyne, England.

"On Wednesday evening I made my appearance before the New York audience, and was received in the most warm and flattering manner. My applause throughout the play, and at the conclusion, exceeded my utmost expectations. It was said to be the greatest house ever known in America. It was a resemblance of the audiences at Drury Lane, when Mrs. Siddons first appeared there, many hundreds being unable to procure admittance. The box book was closed on the morning.—Went home with Mr. P. supped and slept there. Dr. M'Clean and Mr. Simpson, the acting manager, joined us. Next morning, (Thursday, the 22d,) breakfasted in my bed chamber, and afterwards called in at the theatre, and then went to the Tontine."

The next night on which the theatre was opened, Friday, the 23d of November, he played Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant in "the Man of the World." I have only to add to what I have said, on this play, and his acting in the character, that my countrymen appreciated both with a truth and discrimination honourable to, though expected from them.

Mr. Cooke felt that he played before an

intelligent audience, who received with marked approbation, what he knew to be his *best points*. This justly pleased and encouraged him. On the night of Richard, he had been particularly gratified in observing the sensation produced by his sneering speech to Lord Stanley,

> "Well, Sir, and as you guess?"

On this night, the 23d of November, notwithstanding a violent snow storm, which would have made a "heartless void," of the theatre on a common occasion, the receipts were fourteen hundred and twenty-four dollars.

The theatre was advertised to be opened the next evening, Saturday, an additional night to the usual weekly number, and *Richard the Third* the play.

After playing Sir Pertinax, he had supped and drank freely. The next day, about one o'clock, he came in a carriage to the theatre; but was evidently affected by the intemperance of the preceding night. He was by turns humorous, pettish, good-natured, irascible, wild, and attentive.

He was told, by some one, that a paragraph had appeared that morning, in one of our daily papers, copied from a London print, which represented him as being drunk when he embarked for America. He burst into a violent passion, and with oaths vowed vengeance on the printer or editor; but he soon forgot it, and conscious of the inroads made on him by his last night's orgies, he humorously exclaimed,

"Curse that ship-captain of mine, he kept me so long upon water, that the wine has a very different effect upon me, from what it used to have—I can't drink at all—fourteen days upon water—yet I must confess, I never was better in my life—that's in favour of the *water system.*"

He spoke as he frequently did, in a husky kind of voice, and little above a whisper. This was the usual effect of excess. He seemed a little anxious for the Richard of the night, but said he could force his voice."

Night came—he began—his voice broke short and sudden—the high notes failed, and the low notes there were none—the audience encouraged—every remedy he could devise, was tried behind the scenes—In vain—he could only whisper—he apologized to the audience, who generally supposed the hoarseness proceeded from a cold, and he was encouraged to continue his whispering. In the meantime, some of the remedies applied, having been stimulants, the latter part of Richard, though only pantomimic, became very spirited, and to those who knew the cause, approached very near the comic. The public, however, did not suspect, and gave him credit for the zeal with which he exerted himself for their amusement, under the pressure of indisposition. Though a Saturday night, the receipts were eleven hundred and fifty-five dollars.

Mr. Cooke did not play again until Wednesday, the 28th of November, when his fourth night was announced, the play Shakspeare's "Merchant of Venice."

In the meantime, the manager, with a just attention to his own, and his absent partner's interest, invited and prevailed on Mr. Cooke to take up his abode with him. This was an eligible and honourable situation for Mr. Cooke, and he had that attention paid to him by his host, and the gentlemen of the city, which was calculated to stimulate and strengthen him to manly and determined conduct.

His Shylock, as may be imagined, was seen with delight. I never felt more forcibly, than I did this evening, the effect of that "continued discrimination," and that perfect identification of the actor with the character, which appeared in this masterly representation. The reader who has had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Cooke play Shylock, will remember the reverential bowing of his head, when, in Portia's speech, exhorting him to mercy, she comes to the line,

> "It is an attribute to God himself,"

and the rejecting shake of his head, and waving of his hand, when she says,

> "We do pray for mercy,
> And that *same prayer* doth teach *us all*
> To render the deeds of mercy."

Shakspeare, here, makes Portia, in her zeal, quote *the Lord's prayer*, and enforce its divine precept, as applicable to Shylock; but the great actor, by his look and the movement of his head and hand, gives a comment on the text, by rejecting the application to himself or those of his belief. These are the touches which realize the scene, and prove the hand of the master.

As to the play, beautiful and great as it is, there are blemishes, and there are objections to its being represented: but the descendants of Abraham ought to encounter the effect which the representation of Shylock is likely to have upon the vulgar, by treating the character, as the Scotch do Sir Pertinax: as an admirable effort of the author, but no ways appertaining to them as a people. The receipts were, on this occasion, eighteen hundred and four dollars. On Friday the thirteenth he repeated Sir Pertinax, to a house of eleven hundred and eighty dollars.

The sixth night of his acting in America, was on the third of December; when he played Glenalvon, in Home's "Douglas," and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm, in "Love a-la-Mode." Notwithstanding a violent storm, this exhibition produced twelve hundred and eighty-seven dollars.

On Wednesday, December 5th, he played Zanga, in "The Revenge," but was not even perfect in the words.—Passages were doubtless fine, but upon the whole it was a failure. The receipts were, this night, thirteen hundred and sixty-seven dollars.

Mr. Cooke's eighth night was on Friday, the seventh of December, when he played Shylock, and Sir Archy. But in the latter, his voice broke in the most painful manner to his auditors, and he hoarsely whispered through the part. In the house, twelve hundred and seventy dollars.

His ninth night was Macbeth, which he performed on the 10th of December. The receipts sixteen hundred and five dollars.

The next performance was *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, a play which, notwitstanding Mr. Cooke's wonderful performance in Sir Giles Over-reach, did not please at New-York. The character of Sir Giles shocks by his atrocity, and even his punishment, though we rejoice in it, strikes us with horror. The acting of Mr. Cooke at this terrible point, can never be forgotten. His attempt to draw his sword, and the sudden arrest of his arm, palsied and stiffened, and rendered powerless, as if by the stroke of Heaven's avenging thunder—the expression of his countenance at this moment, and his sinking convulsed, and then lifeless, into the arms of his servants, were so frightfully impressive, and true to nature, as to leave an image never to be erased.

One night, in this situation, by some accident, the attendants were not ready to receive him, when he fell back, expecting to be caught in their arms as usual; but instead of losing, the effect was heightened by the omission; for he fell so perfectly dead to appearance, and was carried off so much like a corpse, as only to increase the horror of the scene. The receipts were this night, nine hundred and sixty-three dollars.

He made his first appearance in the best of the Falstaffs, on Friday, December the fourteenth. This play, the "first part of Henry Fourth, is rich in interest, character, and dialogue. The Prince of Wales and Harry Percy, so finely contrasted, and so consonant to history—the comic part so replete with situation and wit—Falstaff and his companions, new from the mint of the poet's brain, with all their "gloss upon them," and with an unmixed purity of sterling worth—make this, with the exception of "Richard III." the finest of Shakspeare's historic plays.

I dined in company with Mr. Cooke on this day, and rode with him to the theatre. On our way Henderson was mentioned by him. He said his best points in Falstaff were only copied from that great actor.

I have before noticed the honourable manner in which Mr. Cooke acknowledged his obligations to his predecessors. But Mr. Cooke was no servile copyist. He treasured up, for his own improvement, the happy efforts of other artists in their representation of Nature—but he never lost sight of Nature in his own exhibitions of character.

The writers who have remarked upon Mr. Cooke's acting, have, after giving him that praise which could not be withheld, tasked themselves to account for his peculiar excellence in this or that character, or this and that manner. One, very ingeniously, accounts for his perfect representation of Scotch manners and dialect, by saying he was a Scotchman, leaving, in that case, his perfect English accent and orthoëpy unaccounted for; another says, he is so exquisite in hypocritical characters, because he is a hypocrite—a third accounts for the vivid exhibition of frightful passion, by saying his passions were of that strong and furious kind; and his great excellence in sarcasm was supposed to be common to him, off or on the stage—but I have not found one who accounted for his excellence in Falstaff, by a supposed similarity in his own character to that of the merry knight: and yet they both were professed sensualists, drank inordinately, and eat little;

> "But one halfpenny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack."—

Both, when under the influence of the cup, were braggarts, romancers, and quarrellers, and both unparalleled for backing out, when an antagonist was provoked to dangerous opposition—

> "I call thee coward! I'll see thee damn'd ere I'll call thee coward!"

"Tom, have *you* got your hat on?—it's all very well, if Tom has got his hat on." Both fond of being "cock of the walk," or head of the company he kept; both spendthrifts; both pursued by the officers of justice; both actors—

> "Come, Hal, let us have a play extempore."—

Both soldiers; and both, not only witty themselves, "but the cause of wit in others."

The absurdity of affixing to the player the qualities of the character he represents, is so very evident, that one cannot but be surprized at the frequency of the error. It might as well be asserted, that he who plays the old man must be decrepid, or that he who plays the drunkard must be intemperate, as that the actor who personates the hero must be brave and magnanimous, or the representative of the villain, a man of vile thoughts and base disposition.

Whatever cause Mr. Cooke's auditors may have assigned for his just representation of the eccentric and humorous Sir John, they could not but agree that they had never seen him personified before. The amount of receipts on this night, was fourteen hundred and forty-four dollars.

The twelfth night of our hero's performance in America, was on Monday the seventeenth of December, when he repeated Sir Giles Overreach to a house of seven hundred and ninety-eight dollars.

During the time that had elapsed since his landing, Mr. Cooke had been gradually giving way more and more to his old enemy. His want of self-restraint, had rendered it necessary to cease those invitations to dinner-parties which curiosity, and a desire to distinguish his talents, would otherwise have made incessant. But every night after acting was devoted to indulgence, and the consequent deplorable state sometimes extended to depriving him of voice, on the following night of playing; but heretofore he had not exposed himself palpably to the public.

After playing Sir Giles, he indulged himself as usual, but became unusually offensive in words and manner, as his unhappy madness increased; and at length, at variance with himself and his host, he retired sullenly to his chamber, and, as was frequent with him, sat up all night. In the morning, he went to bed. About noon he arose, and leaving an excuse with the servant for not dining at home, went out without having seen any other part of the family.

He rambled about the suburbs of the city in his solitary manner, for some hours, and then directed his steps to the Tontine Coffee-house, the place at which he lodged upon his landing. Here he dined, and repeated his maddening draughts, till late at night, or in the morning, he again sunk to rest; if sinking to partial oblivion, overwhelmed by intemperance, deserves that quiet appellation.

The thoughts of a man dissatisfied with himself, conscious of having done wrong, ashamed to see those whom he knows have just cause to be offended with him, yet endeavouring to cast blame from himself, and conjuring up causes of complaint against the persons he fears to meet, are tormentors so busily ingenious, that we can scarcely imagine a more pitiable situation than that of the unhappy subject, who has reduced himself to such a degraded state. A mind thus debilitated, sees no resource, but in madly recurring to the cause of his misery for relief.

On the next day Cooke, still under the influence of his long continued intemperance, left the Tontine Coffee-house, with the avowed purpose of removing his baggage from the hospitable asylum he had enjoyed at the house of the Manager.

This day, the 19th Dec., had been appointed for his benefit. "Cato" was the play. The bills announced the last night of Mr. Cooke's engagement previous to his proceeding to Boston; the tragedy of "Cato" and the farce of "Love-a-la-Mode," for Mr. Cooke's benefit. The rehearsals of "Cato" had been called, but the tragedy of "Cato" was rehearsed without the presence of the hero. Cooke looked into the theatre on his way from the Coffee-house to the Manager's, and asked the prompter if "all was well." His appearance indicated too strongly that all was not well with him. He came into the green-room, and hearing the call-boy call, as usual, the performers to come to the stage, by the names of the characters they were to represent—Juba—Syphax—Cato—he beckoned the boy to him.

"My good lad, don't you know it's a benefit—we'll rehearse the play to-night."

He then proceeded with the intent of removing his trunks to the Coffee-house. Fortunately for him, a friend prevented him from carrying this design into execution, and upon being assured that no notice would be taken of his conduct, he gladly relinquished his plan, and dismissed the images of resentful enmity which he had conjured up to stimulate him to the act.

In the mean time he had never read a line of Cato, and he was now incapable of reading to any purpose. The house filled. An audience so numerous, or more genteel, had never graced the walls of the New-York theatre. The money received was eighteen hundred and seventy-eight dollars.

Soon, very soon, it was perceived that the Roman patriot, the godlike Cato—was not to be seen in Mr. Cooke. The mind of the actor was utterly bewildered ; he hesitated, repeated substituted speeches from other plays, or endeavoured to substitute incoherencies of his own—but his playing extempore was not so amusing as Sir John's—the audience which had assembled to admire, turned away with disgust.

After the play, I walked into the Green-room. He was dressed for Sir Archy M'Sarcasm. As soon as he saw me, he came up to meet me, and exclaimed, " Ah, its all over now, we are reconciled—but I was very wild in the play—quite bewildered—do you know that I could not remember one line, after having recited the other—I caught myself once or twice giving Shakspeare for Addison ;" and then with his chuckle and his eyes turned away, " Heaven forgive me !—If you have ever heard any thing of *me* you must have heard that I always have a frolic on my benefit-day—If a man cannot take a liberty with his *friends*, who the devil can he take a liberty with ?"

By the time the curtain drew up for the farce, he was so far recovered, that the words, being perfectly familiar, came trippingly from the tongue, and he being encouraged by finding himself in possession of his powers again, exerted them to the utmost, and played Sir Archy as well as ever he had done, and I need not say that *that* was as well as 'tis possible to conceive.

The twenty-first of December, the "Merchant of Venice" was advertised for the benefit of the poor of the city—Shylock by Mr. Cooke. The receipts were four hundred and sixty-seven dollars. Here was a falling off. Indeed, the sensation of disgust at Mr. Cooke's conduct was very strong.

A re-engagement for three nights having been announced, Mr. Cooke, on Monday the twenty-fourth, played Falstaff in the "1st part of Henry Fourth," to a house of seven hundred and twenty-six dollars.

On the twenty-sixth, he played Sir Pertinax again, and all his faults were forgotten. The house amounted to eleven hundred and twenty-six dollars.

On the twenty-eighth, he played for the last night, previous to his departure for Boston; closing, as he began, with Richard: the receipts twelve hundred and sixty-four dollars.

He had played in New-York seventeen nights, and the amount of money received by the manager, was *twenty-one thousand five hundred and seventy-eight dollars.* Making an average of twelve hundred and sixty-nine $\frac{29}{100}$ dollars for each night.

Mr. Cooke now embarked for Newport on the 29th of Dec. 1810, and proceeded in company with Mr. Price to Boston.

I had been told frequently of his asserting over the bottle, or under its influence, that he had been in America during our revolutionary contest, naming particularly the regiment he belonged to, speaking of various actions in which he had fought for his royal master, and discomfited and slaughtered the rebels; particularly one day when walking on our beautiful promenade, "the battery," and viewing the objects which adorn and surround one of the finest bays in the world, he called Mr. Price's attention to the heights of Brooklyn, and pointing exclaimed,

"That's the spot! *we* marched up! the rebels retreated! we charged! they fled! we mounted that hill—I carried the colours of the 5th, my father carried them before me, and my son now carries them—I led—Washington was in the rear of the rebels—I pressed forward—When at this moment, Sir William Howe, now Lord Howe, and the Lord for ever damn him for it, cried halt!—but for that, Sir, I should have taken Washington, and there would have been an end to the rebellion!"

Notwithstanding his frequent recurrence to these rhodomontades, I had never heard him, until the day he embarked for Rhode-Island, on his way to Boston, say any thing which approached the subject. This morning in Broadway, on his road to the packet, he exclaimed, "This is Broadway! This is the street through which Sir Henry Clinton used to gallop every day, full tilt! Helter skelter! and his aids after him, as if the cry was, the devil take the hindmost!"

I could not but be struck by this description of what I had so often seen when a boy; and though Mr. Cooke might have had this circumstance from various sources, he spoke so much like one describing what he had seen, that an impression was made upon my mind, which the twenty months hiatus in his chronicle revived in a very forcible manner.

CHAP. XXVII.

Mr. Cooke arrives in Boston, Jan. 1811—*Letter to Incledon—R. T. Payne and Cooke—Dinner with the Managers—Goes to hear Parson Gardiner preach—Sits for his Picture to Stuart—Advice to a Young Actor—Battle of Bunker-Hill—Yankee Gentleman—The Tragedian and the Conjurer—Battle of the Exchange Coffee-house—Characters played by Mr. Cooke in Boston, and amount of Houses.*

Mr. Cooke wrote from Boston, to his friend and theatrical room-mate, Incledon, the following curious letter, which appeared in the London journals, headed

"Cooke the actor.

"*Letter from Mr. Cooke to Mr. Incledon.*

"Boston, New England, (North America,)
Jan. 14th, 1811.

"Dear Sir,

"This is the first letter I have written to Europe, from which my departure was only the result of a few hours deliberation. On the 4th of October last, I sailed from Liverpool, and arrived at New York on the 16th of November. The latter part of the voyage very tempestuous, and many vessels lost. I was received by Mr. Price, one of the managers, in a very friendly and hospitable manner, and at whose house I remained while I continued in that city. On Wednesday, the 21st of November, I made my first appearance before an American audience, and was received by a splendid and crowded assemblage in a most flattering manner. I acted seventeen nights to some of the greatest houses ever known in the New World. My own night exceeded four hundred guineas.

“ On the 29th of December, in company with Mr. Price, I sat out in one of the best passage boats I ever saw, for Newport, Rhode Island, which we reached, after a most pleasant trip, in twenty-two hours; and after a short stay, left it in a commodious carriage for this town. We slept on Sunday at Taunton, and arrived here on Monday. My first appearance on Thursday following in the *new* play of *Richard*, which was repeated the next night. This was also my first play in New York, where they had it three times, and so will the good people here. The house filled as at New York, and my reception equally flattering. New York is the handsomest and largest house. We return to that city on Saturday the 29th, and about the 10th of March journey on to Philadelphia, from thence to Baltimore, where my engagement ends; but I shall return to New York, to embark for Liverpool. My time was passed at the last mentioned city in a most agreeable manner, as almost every day, not of business, we had parties at Mr. Price's, or at the houses of some of the principal inhabitants. We are going on the same way here, with this exception, we are lodged at the Exchange Coffee-house, one of the largest and most extraordinary buildings I ever saw, and of consequence I miss and regret the kind polite attention of Mrs. P., at whose house I imagined myself in my own, and feel highly gratified at the near prospect of returning to it. Mr. Bernard is one of the managers here; but, I believe, retires from it at the conclusion of the season. Theatricals are conducted at both theatres in a very respectable manner, and the companies superior to what I expected to meet—I may add much so.

"G. F. COOKE."

We find our hero in this letter expressing his satisfaction with every thing he had seen in America, and dealing in a style of panegyric not very usual to him. I shall have to mention this epistle again at the time of its return to America, when its writer first saw it in print, and the comic effect it produced upon him. The only notice Incledon took of the letter, to Cooke's knowledge, was to publish it.

The style of this letter is so much worse than Mr. Cooke's usual manner of writing, that if he had not acknowledged, I should have doubted its authenticity.

I will only state the characters he played here, and the amount of the houses, as any further remarks on plays already commented on, would be superfluous; especially as it is certain that, during this visit to Boston, he was either intoxicated or sick the whole time. He was alarmed by the appearance of dropsical swelling of the legs, but his alarm was not long enough to be salutary—he had had the same symptoms before, which made him less anxious, and the cause was resorted to, to drive away thought of the effect.

In Boston, as every where on our continent, gentlemen were anxious to pay respect to Mr. Cooke's talents, and visits of civility, and invitations to dinner, came thick upon him; but, as every where else, it was soon found to be a "service of danger," if not disgrace.

Of the many mad freaks he played here, at this time, I will relate some few as elucidating a character, such as no poet, except Shakspeare, could have imagined; and which, as occurring in real life, will, by many, be thought too extravagant for their implicit belief.

Scenes of intemperance, merely as such, are unworthy our contemplation, and are disgusting to the relater or the hearer; but the shrewdness, the unexpected observation of impropriety in the conduct of others, the biting sarcasm, the unrestrained liberty of speech, either in censuring others or praising himself; and the never-failing quickness of resource, with which he extricated himself from the difficulties which his abuse and insolence drew upon him, make him an exception to any general rule on the subject;—yet I would be sparing of the detail, and above all, would guard against the possibility of the supposition, that I exhibit his weaknesses as any other than deplorable consequences of a conduct to be avoided by all, as they would escape irreparable disgrace, and loathsome disease.

That I may be intelligible to my reader, when I mention Cooke's frequent calls upon "Sam," in the sequel, I must introduce to his acquaintance a most worthy man whom Mr. Price hired to accompany himself and Mr. Cooke on their expedition to Boston, Samuel Claus is of African descent; and his wife and family of the same race, keep a small fruit shop in New York. He has been in the service of several gentlemen, and still occasionally enters into engagements of that nature; and when peculiar fidelity and unremitting attention are wanted, those who know honest Sam will spare no pains or cost to obtain his services. Sam was now with Messrs. Price and Cooke at the Exchange coffee-house, Boston.

Soon after Mr. Cooke had played Richard, when sitting after dinner with Mr. Price and his friend B—, the waiter came up to announce that Mr. Robert Treat Payne* and Mr. White had called on him. Cooke knew them not, and looked to his companions.—They knew them, and did not want their company. But while hesitating as to the mode of getting rid of them, the gentlemen marched up and made their appearance. Mr. Robert Treat Payne, with that confident ease which arises from a consciousness of superior worth, or superior talents, or—many other causes, introduced himself, and his friend White, and apologized for the visit by signifying his impatience to see a gentleman whose acting had given him such superlative delight. Cooke was not pleased with this trowel plaistering, and besides was put upon his guard by the looks and behaviour of his companions. He therefore received the orator with cold civility, pointed to chairs, and called,

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* This gentleman has been called, *in Boston,* the poet of America.

"Sam! bring glasses, and let these gentlemen help themselves to wine."

Mr. White took some wine, but Mr. Robert Treat Payne excused himself, by saying he preferred brandy.

"I thought so," says Cooke; "Sam! Some brandy for the gentleman." The brandy was brought. The orator proceeded.

"I thought, Mr. Cooke, that I was pretty well read in Shakspeare, that I understood him well, few better; but, Sir, your Richard has convinced me of my ignorance."

"The stage does sometimes bring the truth *home* to a man."

"Ha, ha, ha! very well, Sir, a fair hit—but Sir, the first beauty I shall mention was when the attendant informed you of your brother's death—the manner in which you received the intelligence—and the way in which you gave the passage

> "Would he were wasted, marrow-bones and all."—

Cooke, who was writhing under his praise, roared out in his sharpest and shrillest tone, "Marrow-bones and cleavers, by G—d!"

Robert Treat Payne, Esq. was for once confounded—the company laughed, and he joined in it to get rid of it.

" Pray, Sir, help your silent friend to a glass of wine."

" My silent friend—come, Mr. White, your glass ; I'll assure you, Mr. Cooke, though Mr. White says little—

" He thinks the more, I suppose—may be so !"

" Mr. White, Sir, is a man of literature, a player, a poet, a dramatic writer ; but, Sir, Mr. White is a modest man—"

" I wish the gentleman could say as much for his friend."

" Very well, Sir ! That's very well !—Mr. Cooper is your friend, Mr. Cooke. When he first played here, I wrote a good deal for the theatre then, and I gave him a lift; my opinion was of some consequence—but Mr. Cooper's playing—why—a—to be sure—but you know, Mr. Cooke, what playing is—and I must say, Mr. Cooper's attempting to represent such characters as—"

Cooke, who had looked at Price and at Payne alternately, now seized one of the candle's, and starting up held it before Payne, and pointed to the door,

" Good night, Sir—Good night !—There's the door !—Good night, I say !—there's the door—there's the door, Sir !—there's the door!" and continued repeating " there's the door," till the visiting gentlemen were fairly out of the room. Then returning and putting down the candle, he joined in the laugh with his former companions.

The two people who pleased him the most in Boston, were Stuart, the celebrated portrait painter, and parson Gardiner. He sat to Stuart for his picture, at the request of Mr. Price, who now possesses it. Parson Gardiner paid some attentions to the great actor, and his attentions flattered him.

After playing Richard two nights in succession, Thursday, January 3d, 1811, and Friday the 4th, Mr. Cooke next day dined with the managers, Messrs. Powell and Dickinson, and the usual consequence ensued ; he was brought home in the morning and put to bed. He had, at the previous dinner party, made an engagement with Mr. Bernard to go and hear Mr. Gardiner preach, and he most heroically kept to the intention.

He got up, not very different in bodily estate, from what he was when he was tumbled into bed, except with better command of limbs.

While sitting under the hands of his hairdresser, Mr. Price came in.

" What ! up already !"

" Do you know, Price—I am going to church !"

" To church ?"

" Yes, I am going to hear parson Gardiner.

He's the only one of them that has done me the honour to come and see me play, and I'll do him the honour of going to hear him preach. Sam, give me some hot brandy toddy."

The hair-dresser and honest Sam, having performed their respective offices, and a large glass of stiff brandy toddy having been swallowed as a restorative, he attended upon his friend Bernard, as gay as one-and-twenty, to Mr. Gardiner's church. Here Mr. Cooke, notwithstanding the preacher's eloquence and his own efforts to the contrary, fell asleep; to the no little annoyance of his companion, and the amusement of those near him, and awoke in time to walk very decently out of the church with the rest of the congregation.

After church he proceeded with Mr. Price to fulfil an engagement with Mr, Stuart, he having promised to sit to him for the finishing of his portrait for Mr. Price. He began the sitting very cheerfully, having been much refreshed under the influence of the brandy toddy and the sermon, and Stuart, always full of anecdote, which he happily applies to keep alive the attention of his *patients* and elicit the peculiarities of their characters, exerted himself to keep up the animation which sparkled in George Frederick's eyes; but after a short time, all his endeavours were in vain. His eloquence failed as much as the parson's, and the subject of his attention dropped his chin upon his breast, and slept as comfortably as though he had gone a second time to church. Stuart had tried to rouze him by—"A little more up, if you please—a little more this way"—but finding all in vain, he very deliberately put down pencil and pallet, and took out his snuff-box.

The painter having made this appeal to his nose, got up—took another pinch—looked at Cooke—shrugged his shoulders—walked to the fire-place, and then continued to apply the stimulating dust in most immoderate quantities like the representative of Sir Fretful in the Critic.

Cooke at length awoke, and addressing imself to the chair Stuart had left vacant, protested that he believed he had been asleep.

"I beg pardon, Mr. Stuart, I will be more attentive."

Stuart, who stood behind him, gave no other answer but,

"The picture's finish'd, Sir."

And then applied with increasing diligence to the snuff-box.

From the house of the painter, George Frederick repaired to another dinner-party; and some gentlemen who called in about nine in the evening found him full of wine, life, and whim, the very spirit of the party surrounding him.

Among the guests, was a young and distinguished actor, who, enlivened by surrounding circumstances, descanted rather fully upon his own talents. Cooke led him on, praised him, made him praise himself, until having worked him up to the point he wished, he asked him who had been his model?

"Mr. ——, Sir; I have studied him in Hamlet, Sir, and in Benedict—but his Romeo—did you see my Romeo—there was —— himself: when he says, turning to Juliet, which brings his back to the audience,

> "There is more peril in thine eye—"

then whirling round and making a lunge at the audience,

> " ————than twenty
> " Of *their* swords——."

—there, Sir, is a fine instance of suiting the action—ha, Sir?"

"I see you have studied your profession attentively, and taken lessons from great actors; you have every thing from nature that can be wished; you have person, manner, voice—every requisite to make a great actor; and you have acquired great knowledge of the profession, very great indeed, Sir, and now I would advise one thing."

"What is that, Sir."

"Forget all you have learned as quick as possible."

From this party he returned to the Exchange Coffee-house about the usual time, and in the usual manner.

Cooke did not fail to boast here, as well as in the other cities of the United States, of his feats of arms when in the army of his sovereign. Being now in the neighbourhood of Bunker-Hill, the recollection of that fight fired his imagination, and he became, in his waking dreams, an ensign of the 5th, and drove Putnam from the hill, and saw Warren die on the contested field. Walking over the ground, he, as at New-York, addressed Mr. Price, speaking as a person who had been present at the battle, pointed out the place of disembarkation—

"Here we landed under cover of our ships—Charlestown there in flames—on we push'd!—Here, Sir—just along by the spot on which that house now stands!—There the rebels had their redoubt—but we entered among them with the bayonet—the bayonet—the bayonet did the business!"

The boisterous behaviour which was frequent with my hero, under certain circumstances, was a great annoyance to those who lodged in the same house with him, and sometimes produced reproof from the sufferers.

One night at the Exchange Coffee-house,

when Mr. Price was out, and Cooke was in the above-mentioned noisy humour, a gentleman who, in a neighbouring chamber, in vain waited for a cessation of hostilities that he might go to rest, at length came into Cooke's apartment to expostulate with him. Cooke peremptorily ordered him out of his room, and called him scoundrel, and every thing vile he could think of.

The other replied, "Sir, I am not used to such language, and I will not put up with it. Sir, I am a gentleman."

"A gentleman!—You are a gentleman?—Sam!—Sam!—Bring two candles—light them *at both ends* and show the *yankee gentleman* down stairs!"

I shall conclude my account of his mad freaks at Boston, with a rencontre which had more notoriety attached to it, than any other of his private transactions of this period.

It appears that some years before, in one of his summer excursions from London, he had fallen in, at a country town, with a ventriloquist, and *slight of hand man.* Any companion would do to drink with. They were soon friends, and passed the evening together. Next day, Cooke had a party of the neighbouring gentlemen to dine with him, and was very genteel and courtly; when in the midst of his old-school politeness, in came his friend the conjuror to see him. Banquo's Ghost could not have been more unexpected or more unwelcome to the Scottish usurper. Cooke determined at once to cut him. He, therefore, with due dignity, asked him his business, and abruptly told him he was engaged. R— reminded him of "last night," and a promise of money —and Cooke stopped all explanation, by putting a fifty pound bank note into his hand, and showing him the door. The man of tricks very wisely took the note and himself off.

On our hero's arrival at Boston, he found that his friend was on the ground before him, and his name in bills announcing the wonders of his art were posted at all the corners, by the side of Cooke and Richard.

He remembered the bank note, and railed in round "set terms" on R— and all jugglers.

On the thirteenth of January, as Messrs. Price, Cooke, and B. were at dinner, a note was handed to Mr. Cooke, who showed it to his companions. It was from R—, acknowledging a loan of fifty pounds, and requestng an interview for the purpose of repaying it. Cooke denied lending him the money; said he had given him something in his distress, and refused to see him. In the evening, however, the waiter announced R—; Mr. Price told the waiter to say Mr. Cooke would not see him. R—, who was in the entry listening, roared out, " By ——, I will see him," and in spite of the waiter, burst into the room, as drunk as when he first commenced acquaintance with the tragedian.

The figure which presented itself, was enormously broad across the shoulders, with head and limbs, but not height, in proportion.

This was " Monsieur Tonson come again," to the offended dignity of the tragic hero, and he demanded his business, concluding with " Who are you, Sir ?" in his sharpest key.

" Why, Mr. Cooke, don't you know me ?"

" No, Sir !"

" R—, Mr. Cooke, my name's R—."

" I don't know you, Sir !"

B—, who by this time, knew the humours of George Frederick, says, " O, Cooke, if the *gentleman* is an old acquaintance, ask him to sit down."

" I know nothing of him, Sir !"

Price. " Cooke, don't deny an old acquaintance—its Mr. R———."

" I don't know him, Sir—walk out of the room, Sir ! Fellow, get out of my room !"

" Why, Mr. Cooke, don't you remember when we were so merry together, and the next day you would not know me ? but you lent me fifty pounds; and I'm come to shake hands with you in a strange country, and give you the money again.

"I know you not! begone, fellow!"

"You must remember, Mr. Cooke, lending me fifty pounds at Whitehaven."

"Avaunt!" cried Cooke, in a voice of almost superhuman strength and sharpness, "I never loaned you any thing." Then sinking it to a whisper, "I might have given you a trifle, in charity, to relieve you."

"I despise your charity—here's the money I borrowed of you."

"Begone, I say! Fellow, you are a thief! a public robber! A swindler! taking money under false pretences! Get out of the room—I don't know you, fellow—out of the room or I'll kick you out!"

Price seeing Cooke in extreme wrath preparing to advance upon R——, and seeing in R—— a solid mass of earthly material of Herculean texture, and immoveable weight, wished to preserve the veteran from the danger of storming such a fortress, and getting between them undertook to persuade the conjuror to vanish. Cooke very readily gave up the post of danger and honour to Price, and valiantly waited the event. B—— stood enjoying the scene, and wishing more confusion.

Eloquence was wasted upon the sturdy man of arts, and threats were equally vain. Though drunk, he was as firm as a rock. He had come to see his countryman, and old acquaintance, Mr. Cooke; and return the money he had borrowed, and he would not go without shaking Mr. Cooke by the hand, and paying him fifty pounds. Surely so civil intention was never so rudely rebutted.

" But, Sir, you see Mr. Cooke is engaged with other company, and will not attend to you. This is Mr. Cooke's room, and he orders you out!"

" Get out, you scoundrel!"

" I won't go."

" Then I'll make you go." (Pushing him.)

" You can't."

" Then you wont go?"

" Not till I shake hands with my friend Cooke."

" Get out, you scoundrel!"

" If you don't go, Sir, I'll knock you down."

" You can't."

" I'll try."

And accordingly the experiment was made; but the mass stood unmoved and unchanged, until feeling something trickle down his face, and finding it blood, he exclaimed, " I'll make you pay for this," and with all the slight o'foot he possessed, the conjuror ran to raise the watch.

Cooke stood at a distance, looking rather wild. B—— was laughing immoderately at his companion, for not being able to knock a man down who courted the blow, and stood so perfectly fair to receive it—the young men, however, concluded to follow R——, and see what his intentions were, but his movements had been of such celerity, and his fortune so good, that he had already found some watchmen, and they met him on the stair-case with his attendants.

The conjuror immediately charged the watch to take Price, who had assaulted him; but B——, who was known to the watchmen, told them it was all nonsense, and would not do; that R—— had intruded upon a gentleman's private apartment, and had not got as much as he deserved.

This arouzed the ire of R—— against B——, who soon tried his hand upon the immoveable, and a scuffle and noise ensued, which reached the ears of the man of valour above stairs.

" Sam ! What's that ?"

" They are fighting, Sir, on the stairs."

" Sam—Sam—It's very late—help me off with my clothes, Sam—I'll go to bed."

With the help of Sam, our hero undressed himself in less time than he had done for years; and B—— having seen the *visitors* fairly out of the house, returned to Cooke's apartment, and found him stripped to his drawers.

"Why, Mr. Cooke—Mr. Cooke—are you sitting quietly here, while Price is fighting for you below with that conjuring scoundrel!"

"Where is the scoundrel!—Sam—why are you so slow—give me my boots—never mind the pantaloons—never mind the stockings—my boots—where is the scoundrel?"

"He is waiting for you in the gallery, and I have promised that you shall come down and fight him."

"My coat, Sam!—come, Sir—let me find the blackguard."

The Exchange Coffee-house is an immense pile of building, the centre of which forms a square, with galleries to each story continued the whole square. Into one of these galleries in a winter night B—— led the champion, exclaiming, "Where is he?"

"He'll be here directly—I told him you would meet him here—we'll walk here till he comes."

No enemy appearing, and honour being satisfied, the *cooled* Hero retired to the protection of faithful Sam, a warm room, and a bed.

I will conclude the history of this visit to Boston, with an account of the characters he played, and the amount received on each night; which I am enabled to do through the politeness of Mr.Powell.

Mr. Cooke's first Engagement in Boston.

Jan. 3d, 1811. *Thursday*, Richard .	Dol. 881	50
4*th*, *Friday*, Richard	739	87½
7*th*, *Monday*, Man of the World	887	75
9*th*, *Wednesday*, Merchant of Venice	979	37½
10*th*, *Thursday*, Douglas and Love a-la-Mode	764	00
11*th*, *Friday*, Man of the World	614	12
14*th*, *Monday*, Merchant of Venice	825	75
16*th*, *Wednesday*, Othello....	841	75
17*th*, *Thursday*, Merchant of Venice..................	624	87½
18*th*, *Friday*, Macbeth, (Mr. Cooke's night clear)......	1008	12½
21*st*, *Monday*, First part of Henry Fourth	867	50
23*d*, *Wednesday*, Othello	1115	25
24*th*, *Thursday*, First part of Henry Fourth	665	37½
25*th*, *Friday*, Richard	915	62½

The reader will observe that the amounts of houses in Boston, are not so great as at New York. The only reason is, the difference in the capacity of the theatre.

CHAP. XXVII.

Mr. Cooke leaves Boston—arrives at New-York—Failure of Attraction, its Causes and Effects—Romance of Real Life—Master Payne—Messrs. Cooke, Payne, and Duffie—Knox's Gloster in King Lear—Mr. Cooke prepares to go to Philadelphia—Indisposition—Journey to Philadelphia.

On the 26th of January, Messrs. Cooke and Price left Boston, and proceeded by land to New-York. This was an unusually severe winter, and the journey of two hundred and seventy miles over a country uniformly covered with snow, was a hard task to my hero; but he arrived in New-York on Tuesday, the 29th, in good health and spirits, and made his re-appearance at the theatre on Friday, the 1st of February, in Shylock.

There was by no means that eager solicitude evinced to see Mr. Cooke on his return from his Boston journey, which had been shown on his arrival from England. Curiosity was in a great measure satisfied. The shameful exhibition of the benefit night in Cato was remembered. Besides which, it is well known that in the months of January and February the New-York theatre is uniformly deserted. But with all these considerations, it still appears unaccounted for, that on his return, after a month's absence, the amount of the house to his Shylock was only 511 dol.

On Monday the 4th of February, he played Richard to 665 dol.

On the 6th he played Pierre to 368 dol. This was a falling off indeed. He was next advertised for the favourite Sir Pertinax, but in vain ; the amount was only 457 dol. on the 8th.

For the 11th "The Merry Wives of Windsor" was got up to show him in a new situation, if not a new character, as he had not played, heretofore since his arrival, any other Falstaff than that of the "first part of Henry 4th." This effort attracted a little more attention and the amount of the house was 627 dol.

But, alas ! next night to Macbeth there were but 331 dol. The "Merry Wives" was repeated on the 15th, to 345 dol. and on the 18th Richard, to 314 dol.

That this failure of attraction sunk deep into his wounded spirit, I had an opportunity afterwards of knowing. Of fortitude he had none : he sought oblivion in madness.

About 10 o'clock in the morning of the 19th of February, 1811, after one of the most inclement nights of one of the coldest of our winters, when our streets were choked with ice and snow, a little girl came to the manager's office at the theatre with a note scarcely legible, running thus—

"Dear Dunlap, send me one hundred dollars. G. F. COOKE."

I asked the child of whom she got the paper she had given me?

"Of the gentleman, Sir."

"Where is he?"

"At our house."

"Where is that?"

"In Reed-street, behind the Hospital."

"When did this gentleman come to your house."

"Last night, Sir, almost morning—mother is sick, Sir, and I was sitting up with her, and a negro and a watchman brought the gentleman to our house and knocked, and we knew the watchman; and so mother let the gentleman come in and sit by the fire—he didn't want to come in at first, but said when he was at the door, "let me lay down here and die."

Mr. Price came to the theatre, and I learned from him that Cooke having sat up late and become turbulent, to the annoyance of the family, he had insisted upon his going to bed, and he had apparently complied; but that when the household were all at rest, he had come down from his chamber, unlock'd the street-door, and sallied out in the face of a west wind of more than Russian coldness. After consulting with Mr. Price, and showing the paper brought by the girl, I put one hundred dollars in small bank notes in my pocket, and taking the messenger as my pilot, went in quest of George Frederick.

As we walked I asked my conductress what the gentleman had been doing since he came to her mother's house.

" Sitting by the fire, Sir, and talking."

" Has he had any thing to drink ?"

" Yes, Sir, he sent the negro man out for brandy, and he brought two quarts."—" Poor old gentleman," she continued, " the people at the house where he lived must have used him very ill, and it was very cruel to turn him out o' doors *such a night.*"

" Does he say he was turn'd out o' doors ?"

" Yes, Sir,—he talks a great deal—to be sure I believe he is crazy."

We entered a small wooden building in Reed-street. The room was dark, and appeared the more so, owing to the transition from the glare of snow in the streets. I saw nothing distinctly for the first moment, and only perceived that the place was full of people. I soon found that they were the neighbours, brought in to gaze at the strange crazy gentleman; and the sheriff's officers distraining for the rent on the furniture of the sick widow who occupied the house.

The bed of the sick woman filled one corner of the room, surrounded by curtains—Sheriff's officers, a table, with pen, ink, and inventory, occupied another portion—a motley groupe, of whom Cooke was one, hid the fire-place from view, and the remainder of the apartment was filled by cartmen, watchmen, women, and children.

When I recognized Cooke, he had turned from the fire, and his eye was on me with an expression of shame and chagrin at being found in such a situation. His skin and eyes were red, his linen dirty, his hair wildly pointing in every direction from his "distracted globe," and over his knee was spread an infant's bib, or something else, with which, having lost his pocket handkerchief, he wiped his incessantly moistened visage. After a wild stare at me, he changed from the first expression of his countenance, and welcomed me. He asked me why I had come? I replied, that I had received his note, and brought him the money he had required. I sat down by him, and after a few incoherent sentences of complaint, and intreaty that I would not leave him, he burst into tears. I soothed him, and replied to his repeated intreaties of "don't leave me," by promises of remaining with him, but told him we must leave that place. He agreed, but added, with vehemence, " Not back to his house—No, never! never!!"—Which apparent resolution he confirmed with vehement and reiterated oaths. The officer let me know that the gentleman had stopped the levying on the goods, and agreed to pay the quarter's rent. I was proceeding to make some inquiries, but Cooke, in the most peremptory tone, required that the money should be paid; as if fearing that his ability to fulfil his promise should be doubted by the by-standers. I paid the money, and demanded a receipt. The officer, who was nearly drunk, asked for the gentleman's christian name; when with all the dignity of the buskin the drooping Hero raised his head, and roared out most discordantly, " George Frederick! George Frederick Cooke!" The peculiar sharpness of the higher tones of his voice, joined to the unmelodious, broken, and croaking notes of debauchery, with his assumed dignity and squalid appearance, were truly comic, though pitiable.

The receipt given by the officer, I will copy as a curiosity.

Received New York Febuary 19th 1811 of G f Cooke thirty four dollars and $\frac{75}{100}$ In Full of a Landlords Warrant due to Isaak Halsey For

House Rent Due From the First Day of Febuary Last In Full For House Rent Due & costs——

D34 $\frac{75}{100}$ { MOSES SINGUER
Marshall.

The combination of circumstances, flowing from causes as inevitable as they are unforeseen, makes of the sober record of real life such a relation of effects, as a romance writer would not think of, or if his imagination suggested them, he would not present them to the public, for fear of the charge of improbable fiction.

We here see a poor woman, a widow with several children, supported by her industry, who is incapacitated by sickness from making those exertions, on which the usual subsistence of the family depends; while Want and its chilling train, are the attendants upon the bed of sickness. Still some support remains while the necessary and commodious furniture of the house gives present comfort, and may by future sale aid in animating to exertion, and perhaps in restoring health. But quarter-day comes; and in the depth of an uncommonly hard winter, a harder, and a colder heart, sends its brutal and drunken ministers, armed by resistless authority, to tear away the curtains from the bed of the sick sufferer, and the blanket from the shivering victim of penury and neglect. This last blow is suspended but till the morrow; and the anxious mother lies, wakeful and heart-broken, watched by one of her children, who is preserved by health and unexperienced youth, from the cares which waste her parent. In the meantime, revelling in sensuality, and overwhelmed by the good gifts of nature and of fortune, a man who all his life seems to have been struggling to mar the good lavishly cast upon him, sallies out from every comfort of warmth and enjoyment, and is saved from death by the hospitable poverty of the widow's comfortless dwelling. In return, a portion of his superfluity is applied for her relief; the impending blow which would have probably destroyed the prostrate sufferer, is warded off; and returning hope and health make the catastrophe of this "romance of real life," as cheerful as it threatened to be gloomy and heart-rending.

After giving a five dollar note to the child who guided me to him, and making some other presents to members of the family, Mr. Cooke agreed to go to Bryden's in a sleigh, which I had previously sent for. He rose from his chair, his step was not steady, and some of the crowd offered to assist him; but he put them by with his hand, in a style of courtly contempt. He accepted my arm, but before we reached the door, stopped to wipe his face, and having lost the piece of dirty linen he had before used, he made inquiry for his handkerchief—

it was not to be found; and I, fearing a change in his determination, and somewhat impatient of my own situation, offered him a white handkerchief, which I had put in my pocket but a few minutes before receiving his note, and which, after seeing the filthy rag he had been using, and displaying on his knee before the fire, I did not hesitate to present to him; but he put it aside with a most princely motion, saying, "A gentleman cannot accept a handkerchief that has been used."

When we were seated in the sleigh, and I had ordered the driver to Broadway, I endeavoured to persuade him, that he had better return to his last place of abode. He at first repeated his determination, as at the widow's house, with vehement oaths, that nothing should induce him to go thither again—but at length, the idea that he might get into the house, and up to his chamber, without being seen, and the assurance that his host was not at home, prevailed, and we stopped at the door about half past 12 o'clock.

It cost me another hour to prevail upon him, after being in the house, to go to his bedchamber, and to bed; but it was at length accomplished on my promising to apologize for his ill-behaviour. As I moved to the door, and went out, he rapidly professed his confidence in my address and ability to reconcile his friends to him, and when I had shut the door, he called me back, and with an arch expression added—" You know what to say—you have words at command, make use of any language—but German!"

This was a most extraordinary scene, and made a very deep impression on me. Comparatively, I knew but little of Mr. Cooke at this time. I had never been present at any of his orgies. I had dined in company with him; but as it was my practice to retire early from such parties, I had never witnessed those frantic revels, those degrading and melancholy prostrations of intellect, of which I was afterwards under the necessity of seeing so much, and hearing so much more. When I had seen him in his moments of rationality, I had been much pleased with his manners, and entertained by his garrulity, and had not fully realized to myself, even at this time, the excessive weakness of a man whom I knew to be possessed of taste and talents so greatly above the ordinary standard.

He removed from Mr. Price's very soon after the adventure above related, and took up his abode at the Tontine coffee-house, the first house in which he had lodged in America. He had become tired of that salutary restraint, under which he had found himself at the house of the manager. So long used to give the rein to his mad propensities and ungoverned passions, the restraints imposed by the common decencies of life, when continued for a length of time, became irksome to his diseased mind.

At a public house all was at his command, and he could indulge himself as he had been used to do at his old haunts in Manchester, and Liverpool, and Dublin. No sooner was he removed to the Tontine, than he gave loose to riot and excess, which was only stopped by violent and alarming illness.

On the 20th of February, he played Lear for the first time in America; this attracted a little attention; and the amount of the house was 634 dollars. It was repeated on the 22d to 388 dollars.

About this time the manager made an engagement with Master Payne, to play a few nights with Mr. Cooke.

Mr. Cooke, as has been seen, had been waited upon by Master Payne, immediately after his arrival, and was much pleased with his manners and conversation, making comparisons between him and Master Betty, very much in favour of the American young Roscius.

Master Payne very properly took every opportunity of cultivating an acquaintance with the veteran tragedian, and frequently visited him, and sat with him for hours. On these occasions, whether with other company or not, the bottle was always present, but Cooke not only did not offer wine to his young companion, but told him he ought to avoid it. Master Payne, in the course of these visits, could not but witness such behaviour on the part of his sage adviser, as would operate with more force than his admonitions.

Once when sitting with him at the *Tontine*, the veteran taking his glass after dinner, and chatting very pleasantly, Mr. Duffie, formerly on the stage in Dublin, who frequently visited Mr. Cooke, called in. Cooke received him with a cool kind of civility, desired him to take a chair, and then continued talking to Master Payne.

" Mr. Duffie, help yourself to a glass of wine; John, I don't ask you to drink. O that I had had some friend when I was at your age to caution, to prevent, me from drinking! Mr. Duffie, your good health. Yes, John, I should have been a very different man from what I am. It's too late now."

This " too late now," is always the sophistry of those who wish to indulge themselves in vices contrary to the admonitions of reason. No man would ever believe that it is too late to reform, if he did not love the vice. Pretending to detest that which we habitually practise, is the basest hypocrisy.

Mr. Cooke continued to talk to John and drink with Mr. Duffie, until formality vanishing, he dropped the Mister, and called on "Duffie" for a song. Song succeeded to song, and glass to glass, until another change took place in the appellation, and then it was with a familiar slap on the knee,

"Come, Peter! give us "God save the King." John, you are an American, but you have too much liberality to be displeased at the loyalty and affection of a British subject to his sovereign."

"O certainly, Sir."

That national song was begun—

"Stop, Peter;—John, in my country we always show our respect by standing up during this song. Stand up, Peter."

Peter and John stood up, but George Frederick found that his loyalty was more steady than his legs; but recovering himself, he very formally placed his arm on Master Payne's shoulder, and thus supported, gravely attended to this admirable composition.

Notwithstanding the kindness with which he treated Master Payne, and the terms of approbation with which he spoke of him, Mr. Cooke found an additional cause of chagrin in the idea of his being engaged to supply that deficiency in the attraction of the theatre, which was felt, even when Richard displayed his banners at Bosworth, or Falstaff led his ragamuffins to be peppered at Shrewsbury. The appearance of the audiences, during this second visit to New-York, was a mortifying contrast to that of the first; and now to have a boy called in to support him, wounded his pride so deeply, that he could not conceal his irritation, or its cause.

On Monday the 25th of Feb. the tragedy of "Douglas" was advertised;

Young Norval—Master Payne.
Glenalvon—Mr. Cooke.

But Mr. Cooke was sick, and could not come.

He remained at home until the 1st of March, when he came out to play for Master Payne's benefit. The tragedy of "Lear" was announced:

Lear—Mr. Cooke.
Edgar—Master Payne.

The house was pretty well filled, the amount D827. In the course of the performance, Knox, a performer sent from England by Mr. Cooper, who was eternally drunk, in playing Gloster irritated Cooke, as he had often done before, and when the veteran heard him exclaim,

"O gentle gods, give Gloster his discharge!"

he said loud enough to be heard by those on the stage, "Wait till Saturday, you blackguard, and the manager will give it you?"

Mr. Cooke played now four nights regularly.

Mar. 1st, Lear as above-mentioned.	*Doll.*
4th, Sir Pertinax M‘Sycophant, ...	553
6th, Penruddock, and Sir Archy, ...	399
8th, Falstaff, (Henry 4th.)..........	428

He was advertised for Monday the 11th to play Richard for the last time in New-York, previous to his going to fulfil his engagement in Philadelphia; but when the evening came, instead of appearing to dress as usual, he sent word that he would not play. A messenger, I believe his hair-dresser, was sent to know the reason, and inquire if he was sick. He returned for answer, that he was not sick, but he did not choose to play, and he *would not play.*

A negotiation having been concluded between the Managers of the New-York and Philadelphia theatres, by the terms of which Mr. Cooke was to play a certain number of nights in the latter city, I agreed, at the request of Mr. Price, to go on with Mr. Cooke, and transact the business, as far as it related to the interests of the New-York theatre. Mr. Cooke had likewise joined in the request; and with many professions of respect, added solemn promises, that his conduct should not give me cause to regret the accompanying him to a new scene of exhibition.

My connexion with the New-York theatre

had commenced many years ago from choice; it was, like many other rashly formed connexions, continued from necessity. I considered it a duty I owed to the managers of the New-York theatre to go on this journey, and take charge of their business, and I hoped, (a hope perhaps suggested in part by self-flattery,) that I could have a powerful influence over the conduct of a man, whose talents I admired, and whose condition I sincerely pitied.

It must be remembered by the reader, that those facts which I have related in bringing my history up to this time, were then only partially known to me; and I had only witnessed one scene of extremely degrading and wilful insanity—that of the 19th of February.

The 13th of March was fixed as the day of our departure. Samuel Claus was engaged to attend us. A carriage was in waiting at Paulus Hook to receive us after crossing the Hudson, and every other necessary preparation made. I left my intended companion in the evening, pleased with the idea of the expedition of the morrow.

At the appointed time, I went to the Tontine, and learned that after my departure, two of the performers had called upon him; that he had indulged himself freely, and that after their departure he became very ill, was much frightened, and appeared to be dying; that a physician was sent for, and the messenger finding Doctor Hosack, he came, and by bleeding relieved him; but that he was still very ill.

I went up to see him, and found him exhausted and frightened. He felt wretchedly, and of course repented. I pitied him. He reprobated his conduct, called himself a wretch, and said he should die in the miserable manner in which death had threatened him a few hours before. I told him that it was in his power to remedy the evil, but he answered that it was too late, and burst into tears. Had I then known what I have previously recorded, I should not have felt so keenly as I did, and should, perhaps, have spared my fruitless admonitions, and soothings, and encouragings. As it was, amendment was promised, and the most implicit observance of my advice for the future, especially during the projected journey.

The time of departure was of course put off, and the preparations on the Jersey shore remanded to New York.

I now proposed, and he agreed, that we should proceed, when he should be well enough, to Perth Amboy, New Jersey, by water, thirty miles, and from thence take a coach to Philadelphia.

About the 16th, the time of departure was fixed for Monday, the 18th of March, and Doctor Hosack invited us to dine with him on the 17th.

I went with him to this dinner party, and we met Doctor M'Lean, who had been his physician in New-York until the last urgent occasion had called in Doctor Hosack; five or six other gentlemen dined with us, and Cooke's physician and host giving him permission to resume his wine-drinking, we passed a cheerful afternoon, retiring at the valetudinarian's motion, about eight o'clock.

I walked with him to the Tontine, and having made an appointment to call upon him at nine next morning, preparatory to our embarkation, I left him. All appearances were now in favour of amendment, and I thought that the last fright, as well as suffering, had produced a salutary effect.

At the appointed time, I called, and meeting Bryden, the master of the coffee-house, I asked how his lodger did.

"Why, I don't know, Sir. I'm afraid he may be sick."

"How so? I left him well."

"Yes, but he would have t'other bottle for a parting glass wi'me; and he went to bed little better than intoxicated this morning."

Here was another reverse. He had just

taken enough of the stimulus at Dr. Hosack's to make him feel well, and to banish, with the assistance of that effort at self-delusion so common to all men, the fear of returning ill, and the remembrance of former danger and misery. I thought the journey at an end, and walked up stairs with little expectation of leaving New-York that day. However, I was disappointed.

He was in bed, but as soon as he saw me, apologized for not being ready; said he would get up instantly, and I told him I would walk to the sloop and return in an hour. I directed honest Sam to assist him, and to send the baggage to the vessel. He gave no intimation of the last night's excess, and I never told him that I had knowledge of it.

When I returned he was ready. Doctor M'Lean called in, and walked with us to the sloop. Cooke was restless, and complained of pain in his breast before he left Bryden's, and contrived by stealth to get "a doctor," being ashamed to confess the cause of his ill feelings. During our passage over the Bay, he was cheerful and chatty, but as we approached the narrow pass to the sea, the wind became high and the waves rough. He sat forward on the windlass, became silent, and at length, as the waves broke over us, he retired below, chilled by the east wind, and damp from the spray, He now became sick with chills and spasms, and Sam came up to tell me that it was necessary to give him another " Doctor." Sam had had experience, and I suffered him to prescribe. The desired effect was produced, and the patient arrived at Perth Amboy, and trod on the shores of New Jersey in apparent health, and with a cheerful flow of animal spirits.

The place of my family's residence was at this nominal city, but real village, situated on a commanding point of land, formed by the river Raritan on its south, and Arthurkull Sound on its east side, dividing it from Staten Island ; over the low but picturesque point of which, Amboy looks out to a spacious bay of twenty miles depth, to the heights of Monmouth, the mountains of Navisink, Sandy Hook, and the Atlantic Ocean.

I led my companion to my home, and never man appeared to greater advantage in the quiet of a domestic circle, than he did for the remainder of this day and evening. Attentive, polite, full of cheerfulness, and abounding with anecdotes, which he related with all the urbanity of the finished gentleman of the *vielle cour*, giving and asking for information, he seemed to forget the evils of the past, and to anticipate for the future nothing but good. After eating a hearty dinner, with the appetite of health, he walked with me to see the magnificent hotel, which had been lately erected in this pleasant town, with a view to making it a summer resort for the gay and fashionable inhabitants of the rich and rival cities of Philadelphia and New York. On our return, a renewal of the same scene of pleasantry and politeness took place; we ate a hearty supper of oysters, which are peculiarly fine at this place, owing to the junction of the fresh water of the Raritan with the Atlantic brine; and having taken a few more glasses of Madeira, my companion went to bed contented with himself, and leaving me full of hope for my enterprize.

At 8 o'clock, on the morning of the 19th, he arose, delighted with having slept, as he always insisted to the day of his death, better than he had for years, and after a hearty breakfast, began his journey by land to Philadelphia. The day was mild, the sky serene, and in a commodious carriage, with a good-natured driver, we proceeded pleasantly on our way, stopping at Brunswick, and at other stages on the road, without once recurring to that practice, so reprehensible in travellers, of drinking because their horses drink.

At the fork of the road on the new turnpike, near Princeton, we stopped at an inn and consulted on the route that we should take, which was finally determined for Princeton. The sign was a figure of Washington, so called, of uncommon bad execution and design, even for a country inn. While loitering at the door, and chatting with the landlord, I made some remarks on the sign, which, but for the blue and buff uniform, might have passed for Hudibras, and asked the name of the artist.

"Oh," says mine host, "it's a young fellow in the neighbourhood, who don't know much about it, to be sure, but you see what he meant by the letters underneath—for the matter o'that, it's as bad as if you yourself had done it."

Cooke, who knew my pretensions to portrait painting, laughed heartily, and treasured up the anecdote for my friends in New York and Philadelphia.

At Princeton we dined, and proceeded to Trenton, to put up for the night. He joined me in a dish of tea, and while we were at the tea-table, he pleasantly talked over the incidents of the day, descanted upon the change of his feelings after arriving at Amboy, and sportively planned a rural retirement for his age, with peace, competence, and a cottage. The next morning, after walking about the town, and viewing the ground on which the Hessians were attacked, and taken prisoners, in the latter part of 1776, we proceeded on our way to Philadelphia.

We had entered the state of New Jersey at the town which was its capital when a province; we left it on departing from its present capital, and crossing the Delaware upon a noble and picturesque bridge, suspended under the arches which are thrown over the river, so as to form a platform for travellers. On reaching the western bank of the Delaware, we entered the rich and powerful state of Pennsylvania, and about two o'clock arrived at its metropolis, Philadelphia.

On approaching Philadelphia, a traveller from New York is forcibly struck with the more thronged state of the avenues, and the greater bustle and appearance of population. New York, almost surrounded by water, is approached principally on that element. The superior cheapness and convenience of water-conveyance causes all produce to be brought in boats; and from the coasts of the sea, from Long-Island, from New Jersey, from Connecticut, and the more eastern states, and down the majestic Hudson, the riches of the surrounding country are wafted by the stream or the tide, to the great emporium of the northern states: not so Philadelphia—the products of the north and west, must be brought to her by land, and on your approach, the numbers of heavy waggons, drawn by a race of large framed draught horses, going to and returning from the city, and incessantly occupying the road, gives an appearance of business, and crowded population, which a stranger arriving from the rival city, has not been accustomed to. This novelty struck my companion forcibly. He was silent, and attentive to surrounding objects, as we drove over the pavements of Frankfort and the Northern Liberties, till at length he exclaimed, "I have not seen any thing like *this* before."

We drove to the Mansion House Hotel, and there took up our abode; having procured a large dining-room and two chambers for our exclusive use. This noble building had been the residence of the Bingham family, and though in the centre of the city, is surrounded by a garden and spacious court-yards. A more agreeable situation we could not have had.

CHAP. XXIX.

Mr. Cooke arrives in Philadelphia, Wednesday, March 20th, 1811—*Makes known his Determination not to play until the Monday following—Rehearses Richard—Dines at Mr. Wood's—Attends Fennell's Recitations—Mr. Francis—Mr. John Henry—Walk to the Schuylkill—Chit chat—Managers—Digges—Church-yards—A General's Monument—Power to refrain from Ill.*

THE equanimity of self-possession which had been Mr. Cooke's companion since our leaving New-York, seemed to forsake him after we entered the city of Philadelphia.—He appeared agitated—he was peevish in his mode of speaking to the driver—and I doubt not but he felt a great anxiety as to the reception he should meet on this new field of action. The Managers of the Philadelphia theatre had, according to a first arrangement, advertised Mr. Cooke to play Richard on Wednesday, March 20th, but on receiving my letter, stating that we should not be in that city until Wednesday, they had apologized, saying, that in consequence of indisposition, Mr. Cooke could not be ready to play on Wednesday, but that he would appear in Richard on Friday, the 22d. This apology and advertisement he had seen in a Philadelphia paper at Trenton: he now recurred to the subject, and with great bitterness exclaimed, "If I am too unwell to play on Wednesday, how do they know that I shall be well enough to play on Friday! I will not play on Friday!

After dinner Messrs. Wood and Warren called upon us, and Cooke persisted in his determination not to play on Friday, but said that on the Monday following he should probobly be well enough, and strong enough to play. Mr. Wood went away to announce this further disappointment to the public, and Mr. Warren remained with us, and accompanied us to the theatre. It was soon buzzed about that Cooke was in the boxes, and the attention of the audience was drawn from the actors on the stage who were representing the "Busy Body," and every eye turned to the box where the great actor was. The adjoining boxes were soon crowded with curious impertinents, who showed little more delicacy than the *canaille* do when an Indian or a strange beast passes through the streets.

Warren led Cooke to the green-room; and I went to make a few calls among my friends, leaving my companion to renew acquaintance with some of his former English associates, who now were members of the Philadelphia company. When I returned to the Hotel, I found him at supper, with a glass of punch before him, and the evening passed harmlessly and agreeably.

The next day after our arrival, Thursday, March 21st, Mr. Cooke rehearsed Richard. The weather had increased to, what appeared at this early season, summer heat; and from this change, or some other cause, the veteran did not feel amiable, or behave with a due degree of suavity, among the strangers. He during a part of the rehearsal, "threw out his voice," as he termed it, to try the house; and the power he displayed caused looks of surprize among those around, which produced a pleasure more than adequate to the cause. He occasionally directed, commanded, and reproved, some of the younger members of the company, with peevishness, and undue asperity.

After the rehearsal, he went to walk with the managers and see the city, while I attended to other engagements, having promised to meet him at Mr. Wood's, where we were to dine by invitation.

We accordingly met and dined at Mr. Wood's, and I saw realized all that insanity of conduct, and licentiousness of speech, of which I had before heard much, but had never yet seen an exhibition.

The party was principally theatrical, and after dinner, unfortunately the wine circulated more freely than the wit. My hero, who had protested in the morning that he would take care of himself, and only drink wine and water, was supplied by the politeness of his host with some good old port, which he threw down without remorse; but I cannot say without shame, for his eye most assiduously avoided mine, which probably he perceived had an expression of anxious watchfulness in it. The afternoon was oppressively warm, and seeing that Cooke's fate for the day was fixed, I retired to the house of a friend, and took tea.

Between eight and nine o'clock I returned to Mr. Wood's, and before I entered the door heard the high and discordant notes of George Frederick's voice. I found the party increased by the addition of some New-York and Philadelphia gentlemen, who had been dining together elsewhere, and knowing that the veteran bacchanalian was here, called in to see him. And they saw an exhibition of him, in all the eccentricity of madness. Mr. Wood, whose habits were those of temperance, and whose health was delicate, had, according to a custom "more honoured in the breach than the observance," pushed about the bottle, and tasted to prove that it was good; and was now primed with mirth, and so charged with words, that they flowed, or rather were thrown out, high, noisy, and foaming like the incessant stream of a *jet d'eau.* Cooke, infinitely annoyed by this never ceasing eloquence, from a yankee manager, at a time too when he felt that all should attend to him, would interrupt his host by striking his fist on the table, and crying out with a tremendous shout, "Hear me, Sir!"

When I came in, he immediately made way for me near him, exclaiming, "Ah! I see I was mistaken. I have been telling them that you were in bed by this time; but I see how it is, you have been taking your tea. He owns himself to be a tea-sot. He is the only man that shall command George Frederick Cooke, and I put myself under his orders."

W——, one of the new-comers, who was mischievously filling up bumpers for Cooke, and persuading him, the moment after drinking, that he neglected to drink, whispered me, "I suppose then your orders will be sailing orders." I begged him to desist from his sport, and he and his companions went off, professing that they were going to prepare for a ball.

"A ball!" exclaimed Cooke, as they bade him good night, and went off, "they reel from the bottle to the ball! If ever I have an opportunity of quizzing these yankees, I'll remember this. I'll not forget the drunken gentlemen in their dirty boots going to a ball! But it's just like every thing else in the damn'd country."

Mr. Wood, who, was sufficiently under the influence of his own good wine, not to see the uselessness of opposing Cooke, instead of laughing, began seriously to explain.

"But, my dear Sir, they are only going to change their dress before going to a ball."

"Don't talk to *me*, Sir! Pretty fellows for the company of ladies, just from the tavern, the cigar, and the bottle!"

"But, my dear Sir"——

Then Cooke would dash his fist on the table, with the tremendous "Hear me, Sir!" which always produced silence after a laugh at the ludicrous impropriety of his peremptory tone and manner.

"They don't know what belongs to gentlemen, and have no idea of the decency and suavity of politeness.—My dear D—, sit down by me —don't leave me again—did'n't I throw out my voice this morning—Ah, ha!—haw! Ah, ha!—I astonished the yankee actors!—I gave it them—I'll show these fellows what acting is!"

Wood. "You frightened some of our young men, Sir, but they are clever lads, I'll assure you."

C——. "Clever are they? I wonder how you are to find it out. But you're all alike!"

W——. "My dear Sir, I have seen you act when you were surrounded by dire dogs."

C——. "The worst of them, better than the best of you."

W——. "Jack B——, now, he's a clever lad, but you won't say he's an actor. I love Jack, he's my friend, but he's a dire dog of an actor."

C——. "He's your friend, is he? you take an odd way of shewing your friendship. I feel inclined to be severe," turning to one near him, "Ill cut up these yankee actors, and their wooden god—don't leave me—O, the night I slept at Amboy—I never slept in my life before—poor Billy Lewis is dead—sixty-five—I thought I should have seen him again"—

W——. "Ah, Sir, he was an actor!"

C——. "How do you know, Sir?

W——. "Why, my dear Sir, I have seen him many a time."

C——. "You see him! where should you see him?"

W——. "In England, Sir—in London."

C——. "And what then? What the more would *you* know from having seen him?" and then to another person, and in another tone, "Didn't I throw out my voice this morning? I'll show them what acting is. They talk of their Cooper," raising his voice furiously, "their idol! their wooden god! Compare *me* to Cooper! Have not I stood the trial with John? What is your Cooper compared to Kemble!"

W——. "But, Mr. Cooke, you are supposing a comparison that no one has made—Mr. Cooper is a gentleman and a scholar—"

C——. "A scholar? How do you find that out? His scholarship is deep, it never appears."

W——. "But as to comparison with you, no one thinks of making any—"

C——. "Sir, I have heard it—an actor!—He's no actor—a ranting mouther, that can't read a line!—I appeal to you——."

"Sir, Mr. Cooper is *my* friend——."

He appeared to pay no attention to the reply, but ceased speaking of Cooper, and turned his abuse more particularly against Mr. Wood's acting, of which he knew nothing, as he had never seen him play, or heard him recite a speech.

While a servant by his desire went for a carriage, he continued this strain of abuse on any person whose image was presented to his mind, and particularly upon Americans, and their country, at the same time drinking what was officiously poured out for him, with that hurried and forced manner, with which we have seen a nauseous drug thrown down the throat;

when suddenly he looked at Mr. Wood, who sat opposite to him, and exclaimed,

"Why don't you drink, Sir? You don't drink."

"I am waiting," pointing to a bottle of wine in a cooler, "till *this* wine cools, Sir."

"So—and give me the warm—damned polite! but you are all alike—Cooper and Price, and you are————."

"Sir, I never allow a man, whatever his situation may be, to make use of such an appellation to me."

Cooke had made use of an expression, which conveyed an idea of unfair dealing, in respect to his engagement, and a term of vulgar insult; and now seeing a serious effect produced, immediately appeared to collect himself for a retreat. Mr. Wood proceeded,

"If you think there is any thing unfair on our part, in your Philadelphia engagement, Mr. Warren and myself will instantly annul it—Sir you have made use of an appellation which I will not suffer any man to make use of to me."

Cooke disavowed all intention of disrespect, and backed out most manfully, until a perfect reconciliation took place.

The carriage not coming, he turned his glass bottom upward, and ceased drinking: sitting for some time in comparative quiet. At length, with the assistance of Mr. Hardinge, whom he had known in England, the miserable madman was deposited at the Mansion House Hotel, and after Mr. Hardinge's departure, faithful Sam got him to bed.

I had before seen the effects of his intemperance, but this was the first time I had seen him in the full career of insanity. I found that he considered himself, and made no hesitation in declaring it, when under the influence of liquor, as a species of madman, unfit to be trusted with the guidance of his actions, who had voluntarily submitted to be controlled by one in whom he had confidence. This sunk him in my estimation, and made the task I had undertaken disagreeable to me; but I had undertaken it, and had determined on the conduct which I would pursue towards him.

To my great surprise, the next morning Mr. Cooke made his appearance about half past eight o'clock, in appearance perfectly well, and ate a hearty breakfast. I said nothing of the preceding day, but he thought proper to allude to it in this manner:

" Come, to-day we dine at home, don't we? —I drink no wine—this ugly pain in my breast troubles me—we'll see Fennell at Masonic Hall—I think it is there he exhibits—we'll see him this evening, I never saw him."

It was accordingly arranged, and in the evening he sat patiently through the whole of Mr. Fennell's recitations, hearing what he did not wish to hear, or appearing to listen, because he knew that he was an object of attention to those in the room.

Unfortunately for the prudent resolutions of George Frederick, his old friend Francis joined him at the Masonic Hall, and came home with him to supper. Cooke began with cider, and Francis declared he would drink nothing but small beer. However, bye-and-bye a bottle of wine must be ordered by Sam, "just to mix a little warm wine and water with a lime in it."—Old times, when he and "Billy Francis" were together, furnished an inexhaustible source of conversation peculiarly interesting to themselves, and I seeing the mixture made and in use, left the friends, and retired to bed.

"The next morning, I understood that the progress from beer, cider, and wine-and-water, to pure wine, was not found difficult, and that the friends parted about one o'clock.

"What time did you go to bed, Sam?"

"After two, Sir."

"That's hard upon you, though."

"Oh, Sir, it's nothing to what it was in Boston."

The lesser ill, in the comparison, seemed a good; and Sam thought what he had seen of Philadelphia was regular living, compared to the Exchange Coffee-house in Boston. But a calm series of four days now succeeded, which inspired me again with hopes of reformation, and must have been to Sam a cause of perfect astonishment.

On the 23d I had returned from my usual morning walk, and waited breakfast a little, when Cooke appeared. He was unwell, yet ashamed to complain; but supposing that I knew of the last night's excess, he, after some chat on common-place subjects, pressing his hand on his breast, where I doubt not that he felt an almost incessant pain, (when not under the influence of stimulus,) from the diseased state of his liver, began in a low, querulous tone:

"This pain troubles me a little, though.—I must begin the water-system. Nine days were we on water alone, during our passage, and I never was better in my life—this is in favour of the water-system. Ah! I noticed at Amboy, when your mother gave me my dish of tea, her hand was perfectly steady, but mine was not so in taking it. I ought to be ashamed—in truth, I was ashamed."

Francis called upon him, and he was as usual full of chat. He was not very gentle in his remarks upon the recitations, and indemnified himself to-day, for his restraint last evening. Talking of the American theatres of some years back, "I remember John Henry," says he. "He was once in the army. He was one of three officers, who, for some youthful prank in Kingston, Jamaica, were brought to court-martial, one broke, and the others suspended for short periods. Henry, the shortest. But he took leave of the service. He played one season at Drury-Lane. He made his first appearance, an odd choice for a young man, in Adam, in 'As you like it.' I have seen Adam played so as to make it the first part in the piece —but it was an odd choice for a young man."

Thus, when in cheerful humour, would he go on stringing anecdote and remark together, in the most agreeable manner, with a behaviour so courteous and polite, that the stranger who heard him, would disbelieve the stories of his rudeness; and he who had witnessed it would be obliged, for a time, to forget.

On the 24th of March, after a pleasant and cheerful breakfast, we took a long walk through the centre street of this elegant city, to, and beyond, the noble bridge over the river Schuylkill, an edifice which does honour to the citizens of Philadelphia; and is justly the admiration of the proud natives of the Old World, who are so prone to look down with contempt upon us semi-barbarians of the West.

My companion, during this walk, poured forth an incessant stream of anecdote, pleasantly told and new to me, but with a slightness of connexion, showing a whimsical association of ideas, that was no less entertaining than the anecdotes themselves.

" Wood's a pleasant gentlemanly manager to deal with, but I don't like that complaint of his chest ; I think he's not long for this world ; his partner looks as if he might stand firm for a century. Actors are very apt to complain of, and find fault with, managers, but heaven knows we plague them enough ! Most of them deserve it, though. Some bully, some fawn and lie—O ! Billy Lewis was the model for making every one do his duty by kindness and good treatment —Digges was a very pleasant and easy man, when he managed the business of the theatre for himself ; but when he became the agent of Daly, he was the very reverse ; perhaps he thought to please his employer by it. He made himself so hateful to the actors, that they had a custom for many years after his death, whenever they went to Cork, to go to the church-yard and insult his grave—it was abominable—some low-comedy genius begun it—yes, it was common to ask one another, " Well, have you been to visit Digges yet ?" His grave is near the north wall in the yard of the Cathedral at Cork —I have always had a strong propensity to visit church-yards, and contemplate monuments. I like to read the epitaphs, and note the ages at which the people died, marking the difference in longevity between the inhabitants of this or that place. The women generally live longest—ah, that shows the value of temperance—I think, though, I shall live as long as Macklin yet—Many's the hour I have passed in Westminster Abbey, viewing the beautiful monuments, and thinking of the characters of those men to whose memory they were erected—What a pitiful wretch that must have been, who mutilated the monument of Major André, by maiming the figure of Washington—you remember the monument?—There is one of General ——, which I never liked; an angel is blowing a trumpet to represent the last day, and the general is lifting up his head at the sound; to be sure that's very characteristic for a soldier; but the surrounding clouds put one in mind of pieces of paste."

"Why, Sir, marble is a bad representative of aërial vapour."

"That's true; but ought not a man to avoid a subject not suited to the material he must work with? Our paste-board air and wooden water at the theatre is hard enough; but the general, if he was not a cautious general, might have broke his head against a cloud, as ponderous as the jaws of his tomb—An old soldier, when viewing this monument—one who knew the general—perhaps had served under him—took out a pencil, and, stepping up to the base, wrote—

> “ Keep quiet, if you're wise,
> You'll be damn'd if you rise.”

I don't see but what the people of this country live as long as those of Europe do—your mother, for example, what a cheerful old lady—John says to me one day, “ you are older than I am.” “ Am I,” says I, I think not ; —— says you were born in October, 55.” “ Does he? I was born in October, but not 55—no, not 55.” My lady must be 57 or 58—Sarah—Sarah Siddons—.”

Such is a specimen of the matter and manner of Mr. Cooke's good-humoured chit-chat ; frequently enlivened with anecdotes which do not live in my memory.

He, after much debate, had resolution enough to excuse himself from a dinner party to which he had been invited, and very contentedly sat down to an early meal by himself, with a book beside him ; for he had found out a circulating library in our neighbourhood, and in the keeper of it, a man who claimed acquaintance with him, from having been once the hair-dresser of the Bath theatre.

The veteran *debutant* had been much pleased to hear from the managers, who called upon him to day, that the press to obtain boxes on the preceding day, Saturday, had been unparalleled ; and though I was present when the particulars were related to him, he afterwards repeated them to me, exclaiming, "Why, this is equal to Siddons's first tour." Meaning the first summer of that lady's playing in the provincial theatres, after her great success in London.

He was contented to dine, and remain the latter part of the day in solitude, and to refrain not only from society, but from all excess, and had perfect self-command on this day and the next, that he might make an impression on his first appearance in Philadelphia answerable to his reputation, and the high raised expectations of the public. And here is another proof of that vile, and degrading, and irrational calculation, which yields to the lesser motive that which it denies to the greater ; and of the power which Mr. Cooke had, and which all men have, to resist evil, by making a due exertion of their rational faculties.

When I returned to tea, he was taking a walk, and enjoying the freshness of a delightful atmosphere, caused by a summer-like shower which had previously fallen. He soon returned, and made me remark that he had left half his bottle of wine. The evening passed pleasantly and rationally, and I looked forward to the commencement of his engagement on the morrow, with full confidence that his great abilities were equal to the great expectation excited.

CHAP. XXX.

Anecdotes of Actors and Authors—The Palmers—George Colman—Mr. Cooke commences playing in Philadelphia—Dinner Party and its Consequences—Carefulness and Carelessness of Money—Riotous Eagerness to procure Seats at the Theatre—European Travellers in America—Mr. Cooke sits for Portraits to Mr. Sully—Mr. Cooper arrives in America—End of an Eight Days' Calm—Dinner Party at the Hotel—Mr. Leslie's Drawings of Mr. Cooke in various Characters—Mr. Cooke indisposed.

MONDAY, the 25th of March, was the important day on which to commence a new career of histrionic glory. Every new city presented a new starting place, and an opportunity to amend that which had been proved wrong in conducting the race of life. A new set of acquaintance now presented themselves to Mr. Cooke; men of wit, of learning, of the most polished manners and unblemished characters, and every thing seemed to invite him to the enjoyment of true pleasure and the re-establishment of health and character.

He arose at eight, and breakfasted with that cheerfulness and appetite which the preceding days of temperance had bestowed upon him. He told me that after I had gone to bed, which I always did before him, a theatrical man, who understood that the play of " Othello" was soon to be done, had called upon him, to request his influence with the managers, that he might perform the part of Othello.

" Why, I think, Sir, from what I have seen of the gentleman, he shows no great promise for Othello."

" No, nor for any thing else. I understand Wood is to do it, and I am glad of it. Iago depends upon Othello—and indeed Othello upon Iago. —— used to say that he had seen the play better done than ever it would be again—Barry played Othello; Garrick, Iago; Woodward, Roderigo; and Cibber and Pritchard, the two women—Palmer played Cassio—Gentleman Palmer, as they called him."

" What, John ?"

" Oh, no, before him. John, I believe, had not played at that time."

" How does Bob Palmer stand ?"

" Why, pretty fair. Bob's a thick-headed fellow. But the youngest of the brothers was the worst of that family—he was always stupid, and grew worse and worse to the last. He died in Ireland—of whiskey, I suppose—quite a driveller before his death—if he got a few words driven into his head, the sight of Daly would drive them out again. One night in "Alexander" he played Hephestion—Daly was listening to him, and in the line,

> "O reverend Clytus, father of the war!"

He spluttered out,

> "O reverend Clytus, father of the world!"

In the course of conversation, George Colman the younger was mentioned. "Poor George," says he, "he has the rules of the King's Bench, and there he must remain. They are the only rules that ever guided his conduct. He's a merry undone dog—Comes out at term-time, and cracks his jokes. Young Arnold was the first who arrested him. He heard that Colman was down at ——, and he took a bailiff, and two post-chaises, and went after him. After the arrest he says he could not but shed tears at what he had done. When they were to set off for London, Arnold asked Colman to ride in the chaise with him: "No, Sir," says George, "you may pop your head in that chaise, and I'll take your *Bum* with me in this." Always alive, and the life of every company. Goes to bed drunk every night. F—— called on him one day: a boy answered the knock:

"Where's your master?"

"In bed, Sir."

"What, was he drunk last night?"

"Very drunk, Sir."

"We got 'John Bull' from him, act by act, as he wanted money; but the last act didn't come, and Mr. Harris refused to advance any more. At last necessity drove him to make a finish, and he wrote the fifth act in one night—all in one night, on separate pieces of paper, and as he filled one piece after the other, he threw them on the floor; then after finishing his liquor, went to bed, in the morning of the day he had promised that Mr. Harris should have the denouement of the play. Mr. Harris, late in the day, tired of waiting, sent Fawcett to him, and he insisted upon going into his bedchamber, and waking him."

"Well, what do you want?"

"My dear Sir, remember your promise to Mr. Harris, we are all at a loss for the last act."

"There it is—let me sleep."

"Where?"

"There—on the floor—pick it up, and don't disturb me."

"Fawcett gathered together the scraps, and brought them to the theatre in his pocket-handkerchief."

In the course of conversation, we got round to the would-be Othello again :

"I understand that this *gentleman* has been engaged in trade ; I suppose he has turned actor, because he finds himself unfit for any thing else."

"It's likely. He may think himself qualified for an actor, as that requires neither industry, talents, nor education."

"It's the last resource of indolence and vice. Any thing, one would suppose, can be an actor. Foote dismissed his old prompter, but gave him the same salary, and sent him on for messages and trifling parts. James Aickin says to him one day, "So, Sir, we have lost our old prompter." "Yes," says Sam, "the fellow could'n't read ; so I made an actor of him."

We dined together without interruption or intrusion, and though he was anxious to have "the first night well over," as he said, yet he did not lose his cheerfulness. About five o'clock, I walked with him up Chesnut-street to the theatre, and he was pleased and surprized to see that, at this early hour, (and we were told that it had been so for hours before,) the street in front of the theatre, and above and below, was completely thronged with people waiting for the doors to be opened. But our surprize increased, when, on turning the corner, we found the back door of the theatre equally beset, and those who had taken boxes crowding in by that passage, the usual entrance being completely blocked up by the throng.

"Why this beats Sarah," says he, as we walked up to endeavour to find a passage into the house.

Our attempt was in vain—we could not approach the door; and the young men, finding that the object of their curiosity was in the crowd, surrounded us with a rude and impertinent curiosity, which, though it might be tolerated by Cooke, whose vanity was flattered, was to me excessively annoying.

I led him off from the mob, and leaving him in High or Market-street, to pace the pavement until my return, I retraced my way to the Theatre, and fell in with Mr. Francis, who undertook to prepare the way for his friend George, while I returned to escort him. I found him at a confectioner's at the corner, the people having politely invited him in; and on our return to the theatre we found that Francis had succeeded in prevailing upon the rude multitude to become civil, and form a lane, through which we gained the interior of the house. As the crowd opened to the right and left, and let us pass, "Aye, aye," says Cooke, "they understand their interest now, for, as the man said when going to the gallows, there will be no sport without me."

After seeing my *protégé* safe in Mr. Warren's dressing-room, where honest Sam was waiting for him, I joined a party of gentlemen who were permitted to crowd the orchestra, very much to the annoyance of the band. But music was of no consequence on this occasion, and nothing stilled the tumultuous roaring of this multitudinous congregation, until Richard, by opening his lips, imposed a silence, as sudden as it was deep and breathless.

The triumph here again was complete. Expectation, which had been raised to its highest pitch by the delayed gratification of curiosity, was fully satisfied.

The plaudits and gratulations were long and loud on his appearance, and his returning salute appropriate and dignified; the whole exhibition caused a recurrence of the same train of ideas which were suggested by his appearance at New-York.

I found him a good deal exhausted after the play, but he recovered his spirits at supper, and after some cider and *negus* he retired.

The veteran arose at eight, cheerful, though somewhat stiff, from the fatigues of Bosworth Field; and after breakfast we walked. We had accepted invitations to dine this day with a frank, noble-spirited gentleman; and my companion, who admired him more than any one he had met with here, wished, yet feared to keep the appointment. He repeatedly expressed his fears that he should fall into excess, but then he determined to avoid it by coming away when I did.

"You will come home to tea?"

"Yes."

"So will I. I will take tea with you. We'll come home as soon as the candles are lit."

"But I'll tell you what, Sir; if you wish to escape unhurt from this conflict, you must not be so liberal of the wine during dinner. Every person at table compliments you by a challenge to a glass of wine, and if you literally drink a glass with each individual of a large company, by the time the cloth is removed, all your sober resolutions are removed, and then—"

"Very true, very true."

"Besides which, you get tipsy upon common wine, and the real Simon pure, the genuine old Madeira, is brought in when you are incapable of tasting it."

"I will be cautious, and do you be sure to make a move as soon as the candles come."

I performed my part of the bargain. I moved, but the solid fabric which sheltered us, was not more immoveable than George Frederick. He was cautious during dinner, to which we sat down about five o'clock, but afterwards began to talk and pour down bumpers, carefully avoiding to meet my eye; at half past seven I retired, but " budge not said the fiend," and the fiend prevailed. I went home, determined not to return to witness another scene of humiliating madness as at Mr. Wood's. As I went to bed about ten o'clock, I saw no more of Cooke that night.

I arose at six, and Sam hearing that I was up and dressing, came in.

" Well, Sam, what's the matter?"

" Oh, Sir, I have had a terrible night."

" Why, what time did you get to bed?"

" I have not been in bed at all, Sir."

" And where's Mr. Cooke?"

" He is sitting in the parlour, Sir, he wouldn't go to bed; and now he insists on having a coach and going out. Mr. —— and Mr. —— came home with him, and he has sat by the fire all night—this is the worst night I have ever had with him. This is worse than Boston."

I went to him. The shutters of the windows were still closed, and the candles burning in the sockets—he was nearly the same disgusting object which I found at the house of the poor widow in Reed-street. He appeared conscious of his degraded condition, and on my requesting him to go to bed, replied, "I will do any thing *you* bid me."

It is impossible to conceive any thing more vile, pitiable, and wretched, than such a man, in such a situation. His madness was not sufficient to silence his conscience; and, at variance with himself and all mankind, he, while retiring to his thorny pillow, continued incessantly to utter invectives and execrations. The idea of being compared to Cooper, still haunted him:—"I that have played with John! that have played against him!—I'll leave them to worship their wooden god! He suits them. John is an actor! He is my superior—though they did not think so in London—I acknowledge it—and now!—No, I'll never play at New-York again!—I must have one night's rest at Amboy—I know you want to persuade me to play at New-York, but I won't—No!"

I reminded him that it was Wednesday morning, and that he had to play Richard in Philadelphia in a few hours. "I will do it. That I will do—but never again at New-York!"

As I was sitting down to dinner, in bounced Cooke, quite metamorphosed again, and with an air and manner of forced gaiety he exclaimed: —So! this is economy; dinner and breakfast in one." No allusion was made to the scene of the morning; he drank his pint of wine and rode to the theatre attended by Sam, and apparently as gay as eighteen. I passed the evening in some domestic circles, consequently saw nothing of the theatre; but I was told that Richard's voice had become hoarse before calling for Richmond; however, though he must have acted much worse than the first night, "the million" perceived it not.

On Thursday I breakfasted alone, and went about ten to the theatre on business. The crowd which beset the door to obtain places for the next night's exhibition was a riotous mob. On my return I found Mr. Cooke, who having, as he says in his Irish diary, put off the day of reforming till "to-morrow," had another night's sin to repent of; but was too conscious to speak on the subject to me; he proposed a walk and we visited Peale's Museum. Here we loitered until near dinner time, and then returned to our hotel and dined alone. Some gentlemen of the city dropped in and passed the afternoon. In the evening Cooke went with this party to Fennell's recitations, afterwards they adjourned to Fennell's lodgings to supper, and the consequence was, a continuation of that which began on Tuesday, as I afterwards heard; for I had retired unwell to bed before the party left the hotel.

I sat reading in the dining room next day about two o'clock, when, just risen, and fresh from the hands of his hair-dresser, Cooke entered. I had purposely avoided the subject of his folly, but he had perceived a rebuking coldness in my manner which he told me afterward she well understood and felt. He instantly began inquiries after my health :

"How do you do to-day ?—I am glad to see you look well again. Do you know I could not help thinking of you, in bed. If any thing should happen to you, they'd swear that I kill'd you. Come, come, come, I must stop—I must cut—no more of this—no more of this—early to bed to-night."

I seized the opportunity of this introduction to remonstrate, and represent the necessity, for his health's sake, of adopting another system. He agreed, and indeed took care to anticipate. Had I, at that time, been acquainted with the *Irish Journal*, I should, perhaps, have spared my moralizing ; yet, I believe, that, added to my conduct towards him, it was not altogether thrown away. From this time for eight days he continued to be temperate, regular, and cheerful ; going to bed about twelve and rising at seven or eight, and would, I believe, but for tidings from New-York, which brought with them vexation, shame, and regret, have continued longer in this calm and honourable state.

After dinner, and a cheerful glass, he proceeded to the theatre, to delight a crowded assemblage by an exhibition of his Sir Pertinax.

A characteristic anecdote relative to his care of money, as well as his incapability to take care of it, which occurred during this last paroxysm of intemperance, I will here take notice of.

On the Wednesday evening, when he went to the theatre to play Richard for the second time, conscious that he was wild, from the excess of the previous night, he gave the money from his pocket, to his theatrical dresser, for safety. The sum was 65 dollars. The next day, after another night of excess, he missed the money, and forgetting in whose possession he had deposited it, he complained to the managers of being robbed in the theatre. That night he, in the same continued state of inebriation, went to Fennell's readings, and supper; and the next day found the money in his pocket again, without knowing how he had recovered it. The dresser, being an attendant on Fennell, Cooke met there, and the man returned the notes which had been left in his care, and Cooke was the next day as unconscious of receiving them, as he had been of delivering them for safe keeping.

There is a state of mind, in the last degree deplorable, which perhaps more men have felt, than would be willing to acknowledge, when the victim of appetite feels a determination to commit what he knows to be a crime, and resisting the suggestions of his judgment, with a species of voluntary insanity, deliberately proceeds to make that preparation which shall guard against a part, the lesser part, of the evil consequences which he knows will follow, instead of refraining from the act which is to cause the whole.

Thus, Mr. Cooke generally intrusted some person with the charge of his money, as if to endeavour to prevent himself from robbing himself; and then would immediately rush on to a state of madness, and endeavour to undo the precaution he had taken. He would generally succeed in the latter, for few would make themselves liable by refusing his demands for his own money, to the abuse and obloquy with which he would overwhelm them; though it sometimes happened, that he succeeded in guarding his money from himself by this device. Once in Liverpool, in 1809, on his arrival, he gave his money into the keeping of a lady, at whose house he boarded, charging her not to give him any if he demanded it when under the influence of liquor. Then, having made provision to secure a little paltry pelf, the wretched man flies to the sacrifice of health and reputation, as things of no consequence. The state of insanity so deliberately provided for, having arrived, Mr. Cooke came and demanded 50 guineas. The lady, true to her promise, refused it. The madman in a rage flies to the police, and procures a warrant and officers to enforce his demand. The money was still refused, and the doors shut against him. The next day he returns with fruitless humiliation and repentance, to thank the lady, who, by faithfully performing her promise, had saved his money, and made his shame more conspicuous.

For a long time he intrusted his accounts to me, and used to draw upon me for 50, and sometimes for 100 dollars at a time. It has been said, that once, after giving a draft of 50 dollars to a charitable institution, he desired me not to pay it: but the fact was otherwise. His request to me was, to satisfy myself that the person to whom he gave the draft was an authorized agent of the society to whom the gift was made, which I did, and paid it.

After breakfast, on the morning of Saturday, walking past the theatre, I witnessed one of the scenes which daily took place in consequence of the attractions of the great actor. A throng of servants, porters, &c. surrounded and pressed upon the door; those nearest the box-office anxiously endeavouring to maintain the advantage their patience and perseverance had gained, and those behind sturdily pushing to gain the same enviable situation. At this moment a brawney fellow elbowed his way from the crowd, and issued with a triumphant air, his face flushed and his clothes disordered. An acquaintance met him with,

"Well Charley! did you get one?"

"And to be sure I did."

"What box, Charley?"

"My old box, No. 3. Don't I get it aitch time?"

"And were you up all night again?"

"To be sure I was. Don't you see my night-cap?" and Charley, with an air of exultation, took a handkerchief from about his brows, saying as he went off, "Don't I get 10 dollars, you tief, and my lodging found me for nothing?"

Such was the eagerness to get seats, that these sturdy blackguards were paid from 6 to 10 dollars for securing a box; and to make sure of the prize, the stone steps in front of the theatre were occupied all night, that the place nearest the door might be secured in readiness for its opening at ten o'clock the next day.

This was carried so far, that I have seen men sitting at the theatre door, eating their dinner, who had taken their post on Sunday morning, with a determination of remaining there all day on Sunday, and all Sunday night, to be ready for the opening of the door on Monday morning.

I received a letter to-day, announcing the arrival of Mr. Cooper from England. Cooke received the same intelligence from his correspondent in New-York. After rehearsal, he went to Mr. Sully's, and sat for a picture for Mr. Wood. Mr. Cooke, during this visit, sat for three pictures to this very estimable gentleman, and excellent artist. The above mentioned portrait for Mr. Wood, another portrait more in front for Mr. Wilcox, and a picture in the character of Richard the Third.

This evening, March 30th, Mr. Cooke played Shylock in his best manner, and returning home cheerful and content with all around him, eat a temperate supper, and retired. The next day was passed in cheerfulness, either reading, or in conversation. We dined without company. Shakspeare was a subject which occupied us much of the time. As I made frequent use of the expressions "Our great poet," "Our immortal and unrivalled dramatist," he playfully attacked me with:

"I observe that you always claim your part in Shakspeare. But you are not the countryman of Shakspeare. What part has an American in the Bard of Avon?"

"Precisely the same part that any Englishman of the present day can claim in him. As a descendant from Britons, I claim the same share in the heroes, poets, and philosophers of former days, as any Briton of this day can."

"So, so—very pretty—no, no—that won't do—you are a race of yesterday—mere upstarts—you abandoned Great Britain, and gave up your share in her fame.

"By no means. The younger brother who leaves his paternal roof, though he does not inherit his father's estate, is heir to his father's fame as much as the elder. I have as full a participation in *old* English glory as you. Shakspeare and Milton; Locke, Bacon, and Newton; the Harries, the Edwards, and the Marlboroughs, are as near to me as to you. And the glow which an Englishman feels at the sound of those names, and the recollection of the glory of *old* England, is mine as fully as his."

"So, so, so—and where do you draw the line?"

"Why, the year 1776 must be the chronological mark of separation, I believe. I have no claim upon Britain since then, though I owe her much."

"And you will owe her a great deal more, before you are able to pay any thing in return."

We dropped the subject with a laugh for the present, but I frequently resumed it, when

I wished to rally him, and in some of his humours he would repay me with the most contumelious representations of my country and countrymen, that whim and caprice could suggest; always making most flattering exceptions in my favour; exceptions as whimsical and unreasonable, as the general tenor of the representation.

It was not unfrequent for Mr. Cooke to threaten, that on his return home, he would publish an account of the country, such as would expose it to contempt and ridicule. These threats were uttered in his hours of coherent madness. He would sometimes exclaim:

"I'm preparing a pamphlet. I am noting down my observations, when men think I am otherwise employed. When I get back to London, I'll blow up your managers, and your theatres, and your actors, and your blasted country! I can hold a pen! I'll scourge your yankee manners!"

Happily for us, even if Cooke had lived, we were secured from the threatened chastisement, by his increasing indolence. I do not think he would have become an author, and added to the list of dunces who have made themselves ridiculous by abusing a country, the value of whose institutions and manners they were incapable of appreciating; or to the mass of disgusting misrepresentation, so assiduously collected and repeated by the quarterly reviewers. These gentlemen travellers remind me of Garrick's prologue to Shirley's excellent comedy of "the Gamester," a part of which with a little alteration will run thus :

"When well-bred travellers take pen in hand,
To give a sketch of us and this our land ;
One settled maxim through the whole you see,
To wit—their great superiority !
Urge what you will, they obstinately say
That you ape them, and are less wise than they ;—
'Tis thus these well-bred journal-writers use us,
They trip o'er here, with half an eye peruse us,
Eat with us—drink our wine—and then—abuse us."

The first of April was passed as pleasantly as the last of March, and concluded with another exhibition of Richard in Mr. Cooke's best style. The next day, after passing the morning with Mr. Sully, we ventured again to dine out, and returned triumphantly from the dangerous experiment. We passed the day at Mr. Francis's, and the evening at home ; Cooke amusing himself with the novels of my late excellent, and ever lamented friend, Charles B. Brown.

On the 3d of April, Cooke again sat to Mr. Sully. This occupied the greater part of the morning. In the afternoon he took the exercise of walking, and in the evening again played Sir Pertinax to a very thronged auditory. The next day passed much in the same manner, and the evening was amused by attending a lecture, and experiments on gases.

As in New-York, so in Philadelphia, it was soon understood, that to enjoy the pleasure of seeing the actor, it was necessary to refrain from giving dinner-invitations to the man.

Several days had now elapsed since Mr. Cooper's arrival in America, and Mr. Cooke had yet received no letter from him. Mr. Price had mentioned, in a letter to me, that Cooper had a lame hand, which prevented the use of the pen. I made this excuse to Mr. Cooke, but he made no reply. He was hurt, and became irascible. He received letters from New-York which tended to increase his irritation. He now, uninfluenced by any cause deleterious to reason, except passion, exclaimed bitterly against Mr. Cooper's conduct towards him. He heard that Mr. Cooper's baggage was in his possession, while that which he had brought for him was detained by the custom-house officers, and this trifling circumstance agitated him beyond conception.

On the morning of the 6th of April I spoke to him on the subject of remaining another year in America, and entered into a loose calculation of the money he might make.—He evaded the subject, by saying:

"Money can be made in England too—besides, you'll have another hero—George will be here."

Meaning Mr. Holman, of whose intended voyage to this country we had heard. He told me he had received great offers from Mr. Twaits, if he would go to Charleston, South Carolina, for the month of May.

He was uneasy and dissatisfied with himself, and every one else this day, and in the evening sought that refuge from his thoughts which his weakness pointed out as a remedy for the evils he suffered.

He returned from playing Sir Giles Overreach very finely, and I took some supper and wine with him. My excellent friend, Mr. J. J. Holland, from New-York, sat with us till half past ten. Cooke had raised his spirits without having clouded his mind, and seemed pleased with every thing around him. We were talking of the pictures that were painting, and had been painted of him, and that introduced Stuart and Boston. "I shall go to Boston soon again—I have promised to finish their season for them—then I will sit again to Stuart, and send you the picture."

After eleven I left him and went to bed. This night ended his eight days' temperance.

While I was at breakfast he joined me, about nine o'clock, apparently refreshed, though still under the influence of excess. After breakfast, some gentlemen called and proposed a walk, during which, I perceived that this wretched man had continued the impetus of his animal spirits, by taking brandy this morning, which kept up that state of stimulation which he believed necessary until dinner. We were joined by several gentlemen, whom he had seen at the theatre last night, and invited to dine with him to-day.

As Cooke was evidently, to all present, under the influence of liquor, before dinner I took the liberty of requesting the company, they being all intimate with me and each other, to spare the bottle, and to join me in drinking tea at an early hour. This was done, but in vain, as it respected the object of my care. We drank tea, but he drank wine with the eagerness of madness. The company departed, and he wishing me to leave him, remarked on the beauty of the evening for a walk. I knew that on my care at this moment the exhibitions of the next night depended, and perhaps those of the remainder of his engagement, and I determined not to leave him. He ordered the coach for a ride; I accepted his invitation, and rode with him. A severe thunder-storm drove us back about eight in the evening. He now ordered supper, and began to drink again, but evidently without pleasure, and all his efforts to drown pain, only produced a state of mental torment, as pitiable as it was disgusting. He this evening, as frequently before, recurred to what he considered as a blow received in New-York, and made known, in a very systematic manner, his thoughts and plans of revenge.

"As soon as my engagement expires I shall shoot him. He thinks I have forgot it. No, Sir, a blow from a damn'd yankee is not to be forgotten; the stain must be washed away in blood! I said nothing on the subject, but I wrote the next day to Captain M'Lean of the 34th, in garrison at Quebec—the 34th—red, faced with green—he has promised to meet me at New-York on the 24th. The bully will be surprized to receive a note from me. I'm the best shot in England. I never miss my man. I am sure to kill him—but then the misery that will be caused by his death—I can't help it—it's not a trifle that brings tears to my eyes—he has brought it on himself."

I left him weeping over the imaginary misery which would be caused by the imaginary reparation of his imaginary honour, and about two in the morning he went to bed.

While at breakfast, the unhappy subject of my story joined me as yesterday. I took little notice of him, and he observed it. He said, he hoped he had said nothing at any time to offend me. He could not eat; drank some tea, and then, complaining of pain, proposed some brandy.

I told him that as he had frequently requested me to be frank with him, I would now, once more, be so. That he was ruining himself and rendering himself contemptible. He appeared confounded, and I went on.

"You have taken brandy in the morning, Sir, (the last resource of weakness,) several times, but yesterday it was so evident as to be disgraceful. It is in vain that we attempt to disguise these things; the eye shows it, and even your breath yesterday gave testimony against you so strongly, that the gentlemen who called upon you were ashamed of their companion."

This produced a strong, though not lasting, effect. He promised that he would not take this poison in the morning again. Several gentlemen called in, and he left me to go to rehearsal.

Among the effects produced in Philadelphia by the extraordinary acting of Mr. Cooke, not the least pleasing, were the very successful attempts of a young man of the name of Leslie, to sketch the attitudes, manner, and person of the great actor in many of his best characters. The drawings were made from memory after seeing the character represented the preceding evening, and evinced such uncommon powers as to produce a determination to send the young artist to Europe for the cultivation of talents deemed so extraordinary.

This evening Mr. Cooke played Falstaff in "Henry the Fourth," and, I presume, very badly. I passed the evening with some friends, and when I returned, found him sitting, after his supper, with his old acquaintance the librarian. He complained much of his breast. I prescribed bed; and he promised that if I would sit up half an hour with him, he would go to rest. His companion went away, but still he lingered, like a boy on a cold winter's evening, who dreads the moment of leaving the warm fire-side for cold sheets.

"I had a strange dream last night—I thought a loathsome and hideous hag was dragging me to a precipice—she pointed down into a frightful pit—I struggled, and got from her."

"I wish you may"

He understood me, and went on—"If you had not prevented me from taking brandy this morning, I should not have been able to go through the business of the evening. As it was—it was bad enough—my voice—haw!—there are pins and needles—I must send for a physician."

I again prescribed bed, and left him; but he soon after became worse, and much alarmed, sent for Dr. Park, who, when he arrived, found him much oppressed, and breathing in great pain, and with much difficulty. Copious bleeding relieved him. Thus ended another stormy paroxysm of madness, which was succeeded by a calm of a few days, which was again put an end to by letters from New-York, whose contents I never knew.

CHAP. XXX.

Sick-Bed Repentance — Mr. Cooper at New York—Association of Ideas—Preparations for Mr. Cooke's Benefit—Perils of the previous Day—Plan for avoiding them—Another Train of Ideas—Mr. Cooke plays Kitely for his Benefit—Sits for a Picture in the Character of Richard to Mr. Sully—Effect of his Letter to Incledon on him, when republished in Philadelphia—Preventive Prescription—Dinner at the Fish-House, on the Schuylkill—Mr. Cooper arrives at Philadelphia—Amounts of Houses, for Sixteen Nights in Philadelphia, with the Plays, and the Dates of Performance.

On Tuesday morning, April the 11th, I had a scene of sick-bed repentance, of as little worth, as most repentance of that nature. The unhappy victim of early and habitual vice, again convinced, as a hundred times before, that nothing but temperance can save him from death, in some such form, as that in which he had last night approached, promised amendment with all the earnestness of what he once called "*self-hypocrisy.*"

At two o'clock he arose, and took a light dinner. I seized the opportunity to play Mentor to my old Telemachus, but if my lips had been as persuasive as those of Minerva, my eloquence would not have availed against the pitiful delusion of "I can't help it," and "it's too late now."

The next day Mr. Cooke continued his sittings at Mr. Sully's, and in the evening played Shylock. I received a letter to-day with the information that Mr. Cooper had opened in New York, to a great house of 1270 dollars; playing Hamlet.

Regularity had succeeded in our semi-domestic establishment, and early breakfasts and temperate dinners brought cheerfulness and health as our companions. After playing Macbeth, on the night of the 11th, his spirits were raised by the success of the exhibition, and after supper, he amused me with his usual manner of relating whimsically connected anecdotes, until I retired. The conversation had stumbled on the destruction of some buildings by fire; this introduced, and would introduce again, and again, pretty nearly the following train of ideas.

"Was it not very odd, that Drury Lane should be burnt so soon after Covent Garden?

I was absent from London at the time of the destruction of both—Incledon swears that I was concerned in burning both, and kept away to avoid suspicion—I was at (place forgotten,) when Covent Garden was burnt; and I had just arrived at Hull, when the news of the destruction of Drury Lane arrived.—Wilkinson says to me—(young Wilkinson, you know, Tate's son)—" Have you heard the news?"

" What news?"

" Have you no news from London?"

" No, I don't expect my letters till to-morrow."

" Drury Lane is burnt."

" My blood ran cold. Was it not very strange that one should go so soon after the other?—There's a mystery about it.—I firmly believe that they were both set on fire by design—by whom, I do not pretend to say.—The bookseller at the corner of —— street is firmly of that opinion. It was a noble thing of the Duke of Northumberland—he lent John ten thousand pounds to assist in rebuilding Covent Garden, and what was more extraordinary, on the very day that the corner stone of the new house was laid, he sent him the bond!—for he was always noted for closeness—you know him —your Lord Percy at Lexington—Colonel of the 5th—his mother gave him a rub once for his parsimony. She wrote to him to know why he did not draw upon her agent for money; he answered that he did not want it; that his pay was sufficient. She replied that such economy might be very commendable in the colonel of a marching regiment, but was very unworthy of the heir of Northumberland. His officers played him a trick, when he first joined his regiment. On such occasions it is customary for the colonel to give a dinner to all his officers; and he, accordingly, ordered one at two crowns a head. The officers ordered the landlord to provide one at a guinea a head. His lordship was surprised to find every delicacy that could be procured in the country, but when the bill came in he saw the trick—said nothing, but bit his lip and paid it.—John deserves his good fortune, he's a noble fellow! He says if his father had succeeded in making a priest of him, he should have become a Cardinal; "Yes," says I, "a Pope. John takes his bottle sometimes, as well as other people. I have had some hard bouts with him. "Come Cooke," says he, "we don't play to-morrow, let's get drunk." And if he said so, he was sure to do it. Charles is the good fellow! He always used to keep himself steady, and in the morning he'd put John to bed, and carry me home in a coach. John made his way first under old Tate Wilkinson, an excellent manager, but he had a way of writing several letters at a time, sealing them, and afterwards directing them, which produced some good games of cross purposes; I received a letter from him soon after my coming to London, telling me that he wondered at my impudence in applying to him for an engagement again after his having discharged me; and I suppose some poor devil received a hearty invitation to join his company and share half his profits: for, once, his landlady received a letter from him, ordering her to get ready to play Clytus; and his principal performer another, directing him to be sure to have his sheets well aired."

On the 12th of April, I did not come down stairs until seven o'clock, and found that the man of reformation had already taken possession of the dining-room, and was busily employed in making memorandums for his benefit-bill; Monday, the 15th, being fixed for his night.

I walked with him to the theatre at ten, but owing to some error, the rehearsal had been called at eleven; consequently there was nobody to meet him. He was peevish, scolded a little, and left word with the porter that he should not come back. We walked up Chesnut-street, and visited the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, and then Mr. Sully; with whom I left him. He received a letter from New York while sitting with me before dinner, which irritated him exceedingly. He burst out with, "If he says so he is a liar!" but offered no explanation.

The next day, after Mr. Cooke had gone to rehearsal, I received a letter from New York, stating that Mr. Cooper had played a second time on last Wednesday evening, the 10th of April, and that the receipts had by no means answered the expectations raised by the first night's exhibition—the amount being but 560 dollars. Accompanying this, was a letter from Mr. Cooper to Mr. Cooke, which I carried to him, and he read in the green-room without remark, only saying, "It's from Cooper—he desires his respects to you." In the evening he played Glenalvon, and Sir Archy, very finely.

The 14th was a day of anxiety to me. This was the day preceding his benefit; and I remembered his New York benefit, the shameful exhibition of the night, and what he had said to me of his usual practice of taking a liberty with his friends. I knew the desire of the public to see him play Kitely, and the wish of the higher and best informed part of the community, to shew their admiration of his unrivalled talents on the occasion, which a night set apart for his sole emolument offered. I felt a determination to prevent, if possible, any disgrace on this occasion.

After dinner, our bottle of Madeira, of which I took care to have my full share, was finished, and I thought all safe, when three gentlemen called in upon us, and wine was of course immediately introduced. Cooke seemed now to enjoy the advantage he had obtained, for although he would not have ordered more wine, but for this, or a similar accident, he seized the opportunity with avidity, of gratifying his vile and disgraceful appetite. The gentlemen who called on us, were men of the first talents and acquirements, and had come to talk, not drink: and the impression they received from this visit was, that however admirable Mr. Cooke was as a player, he was not a desirable companion in social conversation. They did not stay long, and were succeeded by a young man from the theatre, who came by appointment, to receive his instructions for playing *Cash* with him the next night. I drank tea, and took a short walk, and on my return the theatrical lesson ended, the pupil departed, and we were left alone. The second bottle was nearly finished, and the teacher in a most critical and perilous state, as it respected my wishes and his interests. He was, however, in my opinion, not past the capability of receiving rational admonition; so reminding him of his requests to me that I would interfere to save him from himself, I told him that if he took any more wine he was lost. He assented, and promised to drink only wine and water with his supper. At supper time he could not eat, and ordered gruel; which, when brought, he ordered a glass of brandy, making apologies for the necessity of taking spirits with the gruel; half of the glass he put in his bowl, and sat the remainder by him. He had now become very loquacious, and I found no great difficulty in contriving an accident to spill the remainder of the poison.

My plan was now formed; knowing that he would not, from respect for me, call for liquor while I remained with him, and that after twelve o'clock the bar would be shut and his calling vain, I determined, contrary to my usual custom, to stay with him until after that critical hour should be past. He must have been amazed at my patient sitting; but not suspecting my design, and fully determined to indulge his madness when I should remove his restraint, he sat and talked incessantly. Being under the influence of stimulus, sufficient to make him speak of himself and his affairs freely, his ideas and words were of a cast different from what I had been used to from him—a medium between the chit-chat of his pleasant sober moments, and the incoherent ravings of his madness; sometimes inclining to one, sometimes to the other, with occasional bursts of ungoverned passion.

I found that the letters which he had received from his New-York correspondent, and the apparent neglect of Mr. Cooper in not writing to him immediately on his arrival, had caused a ferment in his mind, which, the guard of discretion being removed, burst forth in a torrent of invective.

"Is this the treatment I had a right to expect? Why I came away, Sir, without preparation—without my stage-clothes—without my books—as if I was running away by stealth from my creditors—like a criminal flying from the laws of his country. Now, Holman will come out after making every preparation; after making a bargain by which he will put that money into his own pocket which I am putting into the pockets of men who treat me as if I was an ideot. They think I am a fool, and that I will receive as a generous gratuity from them a part of what I enrich them with! Sir, I shall have lost money by coming here—and when I go back, how do I know in what manner I shall be received, or whether I shall be received at all!—To come away without seeing Mr. Harris! My best friend; the man who did every thing for me! The man who pitted me against *them all!* His son too is my friend, notwithstanding that in his anger he published my letter, fixing the time that I was to play in London—No! No! by ——, I will never play in New-York again! They have got their Cooper there to play for them! He has treated me unlike a gentleman, Sir!—He writes to me. Yes. But when? After his second night has failed.—He then writes me a fulsome congratulatory letter. They think I am a driveller. He sends me out to this country, never writes a line to me from the time he has shipped me—He comes at length himself, and remains within a hundred miles of me for two or three weeks—never writes to me—takes care that I shall hear of his great first appearance by other hands, and after he has failed in his second attempt, he writes me a damn'd fulsome letter!"

I combated this idea, and stated to him, that I knew Mr. Cooper intended coming on from New-York purposely to see him, but that the interests of the theatre had demanded his presence at that place—that the injury of his right hand, which prevented writing, had taken place long before he left England; and other suggestions tending to soothe his wounded spirit. He went on—

"That letter I received from New-York—that anonymous letter which I kept from you—I'll show it to you to-morrow morning—that warns me against playing again in New-York—I am to be hiss'd off for not acting the last night that I was advertised for;—the writer signs himself my friend and countryman—he advises me not to submit to being hissed by an American audience! An American audience! No; not by any audience!—They'll hiss me, because I deserted them! Didn't they desert me first? Didn't they leave me to play night after night to empty benches?—No! I'll never play for them again! He says that Cooper tells the people of New-York that I am engaged to him for three years. Am I?—I'll show him. I'll write such a pamphlet on my return to England—I'll not forget the American theatres—and their managers! No; I'll not forget their managers! I play with Cooper! Send me to America to play under ——. —— and —— should draw an ass-cart together—a fit pair!—I have got among my papers a journal of my life. I wish I could prevail upon you to digest it and write a biography of me—it will be a strange one—I'll give you the papers—will you?"

I assented, and he proceeded:

"My father was a captain in the fourth dragoons, a high Irish gentleman! he left me a little fellow to the care of my mother, but I was soon my own master, too soon—that was my ruin! At eleven I was entered a midshipman, and went on board a man of war—O, it will be a strange story—I'll give you all the papers and journals. Sir, I have a trunk full of them—the world don't know me—many an hour that they suppose I have passed in drunkenness, has been devoted to writing, and studying my profession. Sir, I delight in rational conversation, such as I enjoy with you, shut over a" (looking on the table and seeing nothing else) " a glass of water. I hate drunkenness! I detest it! For its consequences, you will say;—true—but not alone—I detest it in itself! When the world has thought me drinking, I have been studying the passions—the passions, Sir, and all their variations, and nice, and almost imperceptible gradations. There, Sir, there is fear. So I distinguish it from surprize. Now, suspicion. There is attention. —Now, rage; that is the most difficult of all. Anger—the expression is different according to the object—from the wife, to the lowest menial."

I sat under this lecture, (which will remind the reader of the whiskey-punch lecture in Dublin, when Matthews was the auditor,) until past twelve o'clock, and then recommending bed to him, and receiving his promise of immediately retiring, I bade him good night. I saw that the fountain of mischief, the liquor-bar, was shut, and all safe, before going to bed. I soon heard him retire to his room, pulling the door after him violently, and bolting it. He had made application to the bar as soon as I was out of his way, and being disappointed, went to his chamber in a rage, and bolted his attendant, honest Sam, out, with strong marks of displeasure.

The consequence of my effort was, that he played Kitely well, and gave additional delight to those who had attended in crowds to testify their approbation of his successful efforts to please them.

On the 16th, he sat almost the whole morning to Mr. Sully for the picture of Richard. He was in high spirits from the success of last evening, (and the indulgence of his night after playing, for I had left him to take his course,) and he sat mounted on Mr. Sully's platform, half dressed for Richard, and telling all his anecdotes to amuse a lady who, with her little daughter, remained nearly the whole sitting, to see and hear the wondrous man, whose acting had so much pleased her.

I doubt not but this lady was very favourably impressed by the pleasantry of the tragedian. Many of his stories had by this time become stale to me. I remember that for the fourth or fifth time I to-day heard the anecdote of my Lord ———'s writing a sermon for his brother, the Bishop of ———, to preach before the King. The Bishop is represented as thinking more of the kitchen and the cellar than of literature or religion. His brother, Lord ———, was down at the Bishop's country seat, and wanted some books; none were to be had. "I have no library here." "Why where is it?" "I keep my library at ———."

"Yes, and there you never reside: you have a kitchen here, though!"

On this day, Cooke's letter to Incledon, written from Boston, and already inserted, appeared in the Philadelphia papers, copied from those of London. I could not but smile at the contrast between the satisfaction expressed in this letter, and the violent discontent and invective of his conversation.

We dined, for the second time since our arrival, with Mr. Cooke's old acquaintance, Francis. But we didn't get off so whole from this encounter as from the first. After dinner Mr. Warren told Mr. Cooke of the publication of his letter above mentioned, and he was anxious to see and read it. A newspaper was brought, and he read the letter and acknowledged it, but blamed Incledon for publishing it. From this time forward, he shaped his conversation to the opinion he had thus published to the world; and a day or two after, having praised Mr. Price for some time, in company, he turned to me and appealed thus—"Did you ever hear me say any thing against Mr. Price?"

I left Mr. Francis's, after a vain attempt to persuade Cooke to take tea, and returned about nine o'clock. Finding him still inclined to sit, I went home. About ten he came in a coach attended by two young gentlemen, and immediately ordered wine. They declined drinking, and left him. I begged him not to take any more, but unluckily, poor Sam, anxious to prevent the torture of a sleepless night, removed the decanter before he had received orders, and was peremptorily bid to bring it back and fill a large tumbler, which he made as if intended to drink; then laughing, put it away, and soon retired to bed. His strain to night was a continual harping on the letter and repetitions of "Is there any thing in it that can offend? Did I not speak well of every one? Did I not speak kindly and gratefully of Mr. Price?"

The next day he was under the influence of the excess of the day before, and probably increased it, and in the evening played Lear wildly and badly. Apprehensive that illness alone would terminate the present career of intemperance, I took the liberty of requesting Dr. Park to visit him in the green-room, and alarm his fears by feeling his pulse and prescribing the lancet. The Doctor, with kindness and urbanity, undertook the task; and when Mr. Cooke returned from the theatre, he told me as soon as he came in, that he had seen the Doctor, "and it's well I have," says he, "Do you know, he found my pulse very much as it was when he bled me."

"So I should suppose, as the causes have been much the same."

"Why that's very true. He says I must be bled, if my pulse is not better to-morrow. I feel this ugly pain at my breast. Sam, I believe I'll go to bed."

The next day he was quite well, and after a sitting at Mr. Sully's we rode out to a very pleasant spot on the banks of the Schuylkill, where a society of gentlemen have an establishment which they call the Fish-house. We were invited to dine with them on this day, their first spring meeting.

The Fish-house is a long rustic building, little better than a shed, with some closets to lock up liquors, and plates, glasses, &c.; another shed serving as a kitchen. The members perform the offices of cooks, scullions, and waiters, by turns; and thus banishing servants, add infinitely to their social enjoyment. They have boats, and every apparatus for fishing, and on appointed days they meet, fish, cook, and enjoy their prey, and the conversation of their own very pleasant club, and the visitors, who are most politely invited to meet, and most hospitably entertained by them.

Their first spring-dinner is usually too early for the sport of fishing; they therefore send out beef-steaks and the fish of the season, shad, and cat-fish, with which the Schuylkill then furnishes them the finest in the world; and their only exercise is that of the ride or walk, and the sportful employment of cooking, and preparing liquors, and every enjoyment which the genuine spirit of hospitality and conviviality suggests to them.

This was the second time that I had partaken of this *fête champêtre*, and precisely at the same time of the year, the first meeting of the company, and I certainly never encountered more of the spirit of true politeness and genuine good-fellowship than at the Fish-house.

When we arrived, the gentlemen were some walking and lounging, some making perparations for dinner, and some cooking beef-steaks, or preparing liquors for a relish, or luncheon; the weather was temperate, the atmosphere bland, and the scenery and groups perfectly picturesque.

We partook of the luncheon, which was accompanied by a beverage which the makers called "Governor." I was alarmed for my thirsty companion, but was soon relieved, by hearing him say—"No more of this, or it will soon be my governor."

A gentleman of the name of Rundle, who has an estate and a beautifully situated mansion on some high ground behind the Fish-house, invited us to view his house and gardens; and a very pleasant ramble occupied the time until dinner.

At a little after three, we sat down to a meal of fish and beef-steaks. The mayor of the city of Philadelphia, Mr. Wharton, presided. The members of the club and their guests made a company of about forty.—Cooke was pleased, and pleasing. He never for a moment lost the desire of making himself agreeable to the company. He went beyond the boundary line, to be sure, but, (pardon the expression,) he got tipsy like a gentleman. I sat opposite to him, and some conversation induced the remark from me, that Mr. Cooke knew little of our country, as he had now for the first time visited it. He, in his indescribably peculiar manner, said to his neighbour, "He don't know that;" and this was the only insinuation I ever heard from him, of his having been in America before.

One of the company overturned a decanter near him, and the wine ran from him towards me. He attracted attention, by observing, "See? is it not very strange?—The wine runs from *me!* and towards *that* man too of all others." This produced a laugh; and I observed—

"Do you not know the reason?"

"No—What is it?"

"I never abuse it."

Before night we returned to the city. Some of our guests would have detained Cooke, and no force was necessary; but I whispered them, that if they wished to see Sir Pertinax to-morrow, they must give up Cooke for to-day. Our coachman had had so large a share of the good creature, that Mr. Hardinge took the reins; and with his friend Francis by his side, the merry tragedian returned very jovially to the Mansion-house.

After our companions had left us, I was called out by a gentleman, who interested himself in a project to have Mr. Fennell employed at the theatre, to play Othello to Mr. Cooke's Iago; a part Mr. Cooke had not yet acted either in New-York or Philadelphia. When I returned, I found him in high and most peremptory tones and terms, ordering Sam to go for a coach, but on my entrance he ceased, and without a word from me on the subject, went soon and early to bed.

He did not get up until twelve the next day, but then quite well, and went to sit again to Mr. Sully. In the evening he played Sir Pertinax with all his skill and spirit, the attraction and applause unabated.

This evening he said—

"I have run fifteen nights without bolting out of the course—I shall go the sixteenth now.

I never did such a thing before. Yes, I did though—and more. The first winter in London, and my first summer after my London engagement. I played *that summer*, thirty-six nights in six weeks, and travelled two thousand miles. I swept the grass that summer."

His sixteenth night was the twentieth of April, which ended his engagement. Richard being the last, as the first, of the list.

I had notice the day before, that Mr Cooper would be in town at five o'clock this day to dinner, and made an appointment to meet him. After dinner he went to the theatre, and surprized Cooke by opening the stage door for him, when he was coming off from one of his scenes.

I will close this chapter with the amount of the houses of this first engagement of Mr. Cooke in Philadelphia.

		Doll.	
March 25th, 1811,	Richard Third,	1348	15
27*th*,	Richard Third,	1114	
29*th*,	Man of the World,	1474	34
30*th*,	Merchant of Venice,	1159	62
April 1*st*,	Richard the Third,	1187	50
3*d*,	Man of the World,	1202	50
5*th*,	King Lear,	995	75
6*th*,	New Way to Pay Old Debts,	1035	6
8*th*,	1st part Henry 4th,	1020	
10*th*,	Merchant of Venice,	870	50

		Doll.	
April 11*th*,	Macbeth,	778	
13*th*,	Douglas, and Love-a-la Mode,	1196	
15*th*,	Every Man in his Humour,	1365	25
17*th*,	King Lear,	668	
19*th*,	Man of the World,	948	25
20*th*,	Richard the Third,	997	40
	Total in 16 nights, Dol.	17360	32

Making an average of 1085 $\frac{2}{100}$ dollars. Expenses 390 dollars per night.

CHAP. XXXII.

Mr. Cooke consents to play Four Nights more in Philadelphia—Another Dinner Party, and Indisposition—Plays with Mr. Cooper—Consents to Play at New-York and Baltimore—Disappointment of the Boston Managers—Extra Scene in the Fair Penitent at New-York—Mr. Cooke at a Tea Party—Characters played, and Amount of Houses for Nine Nights at New-York, in May, 1811.

Before Cooke returned from playing Richard, on the evening of the 20th of April, Mr. Cooper and two friends came to the Mansion-house Hotel, and we had a consultation upon a plan of making an arrangement with the managers of the Philadelphia theatre, for an engagement for both Cooke and Cooper, to commence next Friday evening, the 26th of April, which would detain me until the first of May. I agreed to my share of the business, with the exception, that in the interval between the present time and the time of beginning the new engagement, I must make a visit to my family.

Mr. Cooke, on coming home, cheerfully agreed to remain in Philadelphia, while Cooper should return to New-York, and play, and then return to commence with him in "Othello," for Friday; and I left them at the supper table, and retired to bed, having ordered a coach to be ready at five o'clock, to carry me to Amboy next day.

On Wednesday evening, the 24th, I again arrived at the Mansion-house Hotel, Philadelphia. Mr. Cooke was in bed, where he had been since Tuesday night. The day after that on which I left him, he dined out with a party at the house of a gentleman of the first respectability, and in the evening was seized with spasms, and difficulty of breathing. One of the company, a physician, bled him, and he was put to bed on the spot.

The next day, a friend of Mr. Cooper's took him out in a carriage some miles, to the house of an acquaintance; there they dined, and he got home at eight in the evening, and his companion left him. The St. George's Society dined that day at the Mansion-house, and they sent a deputation to invite Mr. Cooke to join them, (he had before declined a former invitation of some days back,) he yielded, and before they broke up he was placed in the president's chair. He got to bed soon after twelve o'clock, and there I found him on my return to Philadelphia. He told me that Cooper had promised to be with him to dinner, at five o'clock next day. We waited dinner on Thursday, for Mr. Cooper; who did not join us, however, until we had given him up for the evening, his carriage having broke down on the road, and delayed him.

On Friday morning, some gentlemen by invitation attended rehearsal, which was conducted with unusual regularity, and some of the scenes of Othello and Iago played nearly as at night. Curiosity was now all alive again, and the anxiety to see Cooke and Cooper together, caused as great a trial of skill to procure seats as had been evinced on Cooke's first arrival.

In the mean time nothing could be more careful and temperate than Mr. Cooke. Two days previous to playing with Mr. Cooper, and during the whole time of their playing together, Mr. Cooke was as perfectly temperate as any man living. In vain is his beloved port-wine set before him; he can abstain without inconvenience, because there is a present motive of sufficient consequence to his mind. Another proof of what I have before asserted, that the plea of "I can't help it," and "it's too late now," is mere self-delusion, or "self-hypocrisy;" and of that perversity of the human intellect which enforces the lesser motive, and neglects the greater and more essential. To keep himself in order to play in his best style by the side of Mr. Cooper, was a motive sufficient at this time to counteract all those falsely called *irresistible* propensities, which he knew would soon cause his miserable death.

On the morning of the 27th when I accosted him with a "How do you do, Sir?" he replied, "O, not at all well—feverish all night—didn't get asleep till after day-light, and I went to bed before twelve too. Ah! Tuesday night will come, and then see when I'll tread the boards again—at least for some time to come.—In London two nights a-week were enough; at three I grumbled; four I would not do. I complained to Mr. Harris of playing four nights a-week; I said "it's too much, Sir." "Why, yes," says he, "it's almost as much as playing six nights in the country at a race week." There he had me. "But consider, Sir, what I get at the race week." "I do, and I consider that what you get there comes to you from here; if you had not played here, you would have got nothing there."

He commended Mr. Cooper's Othello very highly. They went to the rehearsal of the Gamester, and after it was over he said to me:

"I'll tell you what, Tom and I were not very clear at rehearsal this morning. I hope we shall not do to-night as Kemble and I once did in this same play. We played a scene of the third act in the second. I was frightened out of my wits. "We're wrong," says I—"Go on," says he—and we went through it. When we came off, I exclaimed, "Do you know what we have done? we have played the scene of the third act." "I know it," says John, very coolly—"And what shall we do in the third act?" "Play the second." And so we did. But the best of the joke was, that the papers never found it out."

The Gamester was well played, notwithstanding his fears, and the next day he dined at the house in which he began his first mad career, after playing his first night in Philadelphia. But the same temptations had no effect now; he was to play Pierre the next night with Mr. Cooper's Jaffier, and that consideration resisted all temptation.

The business proceeded with the most perfect success and regularity; and the four nights ended on Tuesday evening, April the 30th, when "Othello" was again played, and for the benefit of Mr. Cooper.

Mr. Cooke had continued until this day uniform in asserting that he should go from hence on to Boston; and that he never would play again in New-York. It was a part of the plan of the New-York managers that he should play with the Philadelphia company in Baltimore; to which place they were, after a few benefit nights, to proceed. Mr. Cooke, however, pertinaciously rejected the idea ; and asserting that his engagement made with Mr. Cooper was now finished, he actually had made an engagement with the Boston Managers for a part of the month of May.

Mr. Cooper had at this time a long conversation on business with Mr. Cooke ; and began by convincing him that the ten months' engagement he had entered into with him would not expire until July, even if the voyages from and to Europe were to be included in the time. This was assented to, as soon as it was clearly expressed. The Boston engagement for the 14th of May was done away. Mr. Cooper then proceeded to point out a plan of operations. First, so many nights at New-York. This was agreed to, as soon as the idea could be removed of a design formed in New-York to hiss him for refusing to play.

"Well, then," proceeded the manager, "we will return here, in my carriage, and proceed on to Baltimore."

"No, no! I'll never play in Baltimore! I have said, and sworn it, and I never will."

And he swore again that he would not go to Baltimore. The *Manager* had only to permit him to exhaust this puff of passion, and then to represent the amount of salary, and the benefit, and the disappointment of the public; and all difficulties vanished like ice-hills in July. It was agreed that he should return to New-York, Mr. Cooper driving him *Tandem*, and then in the same style back to Philadelphia, and so on to Baltimore; and never road appeared smoother than that which lay before my irresolute hero, who may be said to have been ever changing, yet always the same.

After dinner he talked as familiarly of the intended journey to Baltimore, as though it had been a thing always pleasant in contemplation.

The Philadelphia engagement ending this evening with Othello, I made my preparations for departing the next morning, May 1st; and accordingly, leaving the theatrical heroes to make their triumphal journey to New-York, I proceeded to my family residence at Perth Amboy.

The four last nights of performance, and the receipts, were as follow:

April 26*th*,	Othello	*Dol.* 1504	76
27*th*,	Gamester	1193	0
29*th*,	Venice Preserved	1312	0
30*th*,	Othello	1292	30

In the mean time, what was the astonishment of the Boston managers, who, in consequence of Mr. Cooke's engagement, by letters which had passed between him and Mr. Bernard, had shortened their usual season by way of re-commencing with Cooke on the 14th of May; and had bought up benefit nights, besides suffering in their own receipts by the idea that he was coming? My hero had no excuse to make, but as in the case of Mr. Harris, he forgot that he was engaged in one place when he made an engagement for another.

On his return to New-York he took up his abode again at the Tontine Coffee-house, and re-commenced his *regular* mode of living, as before, in the same house. He felt that he had neither reputation to gain nor lose in New-York, and he gave full sway to his vile propensity to sensual indulgence.

I returned to New-York on Monday, the 6th of May; "Richard the Third" was advertised for that night. Richard, Mr. Cooke—Richmond, Mr. Cooper. About twelve o'clock I called upon him at the coffee-house, and found him eating cold beef, and drinking Madeira wine, and evidently under the influence of the preceding day's intemperance. He apologized to me for his drinking at that time of day, by saying that he considered himself as now making his dinner, and should eat no more until after he had played Richard. He played that night without exposing himself, and that is all that can be said in favour of his performance, at any time during this engagement at New-York. On the other hand, in two or three instances his situation was evident to many, and his want of recollection to all.

On the evening of the 17th, in playing Horatio in the Fair Penitent, he lost all recollection of the part, and stopped the scene between himself and Mr. Cooper, who played Horatio, by what in theatrical phrase is called a *dead stand*. It was at one of Horatio's finest speeches. " A wretched crew ye are, &c." The prompter, true to his duty, kept repeating, " a wretched crew ye are," and at each repeat louder and more distinct. Cooke looked at him, and cried, " damn you, Sir, hold your tongue." Cooper put his hat before his face, and prompted him. Cooke began to laugh, and, with such a comic shaking of body, and eccentric turn of the eye, looking at Lothario, that many thought it was Cooper who was at a stand, and a hissing commenced. Cooke saw the mischief he was doing, and immediately stepped forward and assured the audience that the imperfection was with him, and not Mr. Cooper; that he had not played the part for a long time, and begged their indulgence. Applause followed, and the play went on with a hobbling gait to the end.

Conscious that he had almost forgotten Horatio, and too indolent to read it over, he had at first determined not to play the part, though announced for it; and accordingly, instead of coming to the theatre to rehearse, he lay in bed until one o'clock, and then was persuaded to get up and do his duty, by my promising to dine with him, and assist his recovery of the words of Horatio, by reading the scenes with him. Before he went to the theatre, by this means, he had perfectly recovered the part, and repeated it very finely several times in succession.

During this visit to New-York, Mr. Cooke exhibited himself at a tea-party. Master Payne had frequently pressed him to make a visit at his father's house, about two miles from Cooke's lodgings; and at length a time was appointed when he should pass the evening with his young friend. A party of ladies and gentlemen met, all anxious to see this extraordinary creature, and anticipating the pleasure to be derived, as they supposed, from his conversation, his humour, and his wit. Cooke, true to his engagement this time, refused an invitation to dinner, and waited for his young admirer to lead him to the circle of his friends; but tired of solitude, he sent for Bryden *pour passer le temps* over a bottle of Madeira, and when Master Payne arrived with a coach to convey him to the tea-party, Cooke was charged much higher with wine than with wit. He was, however, dressed, and as he thought prepared, and it would not do on his companion's part to suggest any thing to the contrary; besides, that the effect of what he had taken did not yet appear in its most glaring consequences. They arrived, and Cooke, with that stiffness produced by the endeavour to counteract involuntary motion, was introduced into a large circle of gentlemen, distinguished for learning, or wit, or taste; and ladies, equally distinguished for those acquirements and endowments most valued in their sex.

A part of the property of the tragedian which had been seized by the custom-house officers, under the non-importation law, had not been yet released, owing to some delay from necessary form, and this was a constant subject of irritation to him, particularly that they should withhold from him the celebrated cups presented to him by the Liverpool managers: and now his introductory speech among his expecting circle, was addressed to one of the gentlemen, with whom he was acquainted, and was an exclamation without any prefatory matter, of "they have stolen my cups!"

The astonishment of such an assembly may be imagined. After making his bows with much circumspection, he seated himself, and very wisely stuck to his chair for the remainder of the evening; and he likewise stuck to his text, and his cups triumphed over every image that could be presented to his imagination.

"Madam, they have stopped my cups. Why did they not stop my swords? No, they let my *swords* pass. But my cups will melt, and they have a greater love for silver than for steel. My swords would be useless with them; but they can melt my cups and turn them to dollars! And my Shakspeare—they had better keep that: they need his instruction, and may improve by him—if they know how to read him."

Seeing a print of Kemble in Rolla, he addressed it: "Ah, John, are you there!" then turning to Master Payne, he, in his half-whispering manner, added, "I don't want to die in this country—John Kemble will laugh."

Among the company was an old and tried revolutionary officer—a true patriot of '76.

Hearing Cooke rail against the country and the government, he at first began to explain, and then to defend; but soon finding what his antagonist's situation was, he ceased opposition. Cooke continued his insolence, and finding that he was unnoticed, and even what he said in the shape of query unattended to, he went on:

"That's right, you are prudent—the government may hear of it—walls have ears!"

Tea was repeatedly presented to him, which he refused. The little black girl with her *server* next offered him cake—this he rejected with some asperity. Fruit was offered to him, and he told the girl he was "sick of seeing her face." Soon after, she brought him wine. "Why, you little black angel," says Cooke, taking the wine, "you look like the devil, but you bear a passport that would carry you unquestioned into paradise."

The company separated early, and Master Payne happily resigned his visitor to the safe keeping of the waiters of the Tontine Coffee-house.

On the twenty-sixth of May, Mr. Cooke left New-York for Baltimore, after having played nine nights, Mr. Cooper playing with him.

The plays, characters, and amount of houses, were as follow:

	Dol.
May 6*th*, Richard the Third. Cooke Richard; Cooper, Richmond; amount	1380
8*th*, Othello. Cooke, Iago; Cooper, Othello—amount	1620
(This was the first time of Mr. Cooke's playing Iago in New-York.)	
10*th*, The Gamester. Cooke, Stukely; Cooper, Beverly, ...	945
13*th*, Othello. Cooke, Iago; Cooper, Othello, ...	1123

		Dol.
May 15*th*,	Alexander the Great, and Love a-la-Mode. Cooke, Clytus and Sir Archy; Cooper, Alexander,	935
17*th*,	Fair Penitent. Cooke, Horatio; Cooper, Lothario, ...	678
20*th*,	Venice Preserved. Cooke, Pierre; Cooper, Jaffier, ...	934
22*d*,	Mr. Cooke's benefit, 1st part of Henry the Fourth. Cooke, Falstaff; Cooper, Hotspur, ...	884
24*th*,	Othello. Cooke, Iago; Cooper Othello, ...	1130

CHAP. XXXIII.

Mr. Cooke goes to Baltimore—Family Jewels—King of the Yankee Doodles—Mr. Cooke returns to New-York—his Marriage—Mr. Tyler—Rockaway—Steam-boat on the Hudson—Mr. Cooke at Albany—Cohoes—Waterford—Green-bush—Mr. Doige—Mr. Cooke's Liberality and Benevolence—Lord Byron—Walter Scot—A wonderfully kind Friend—Balls-town—Saratoga—Lake George—Mr. Carter the Missionary—Miss Owenson—Return to Albany and New-York.

Mr. Cooke seems, after his arrival in America, to have abandoned the idea of journalizing; yet I find in a very thin marbled-cover book, some connected hints or notes, little more than dates, and among the rest he says of his journey to Baltimore, "On Sunday, the 27th of May, crossed the North River to Paul's (Paulus) Hook, with Messrs. Price, Simpson, and Hilson, (Mr. C. and son, had crossed before us). The three former left us, and we set out for Brunswick in a tandem. On Monday arrived at Philadelphia. Tuesday, slept at Christeen;

Wednesday, at the Red Lion, sixteen miles short of Baltimore, and arrived to breakfast at the latter, on Tuesday morning. On Friday, the 31st of May, commenced at Baltimore, and finished on Monday the 10th of June." After which day the corporation laws of Baltimore do not permit the theatre to be opened.

Here, as in every other city on the continent, the greatest admiration was shown of Mr. Cooke's talents as an actor, and the strongest desire to pay him every respect as a gentleman. But the same obstacles arose to the fulfilment of this wish, as at every other place he had visited.

In one instance, when a gentleman happened to mention that his family were among the first settlers of Maryland, he asked him if he had carefully preserved the family jewels? And on being questioned as to his meaning, replied, "the chains and hand-cuffs."

The notoriety of his character, preserved him from such returns, as such language would have met if coming from other men; and this, perhaps, encouraged him to indulge what he called his propensity to sarcasm.

At a dinner-party given in honour of him by Mr. ——, he was led, still continuing his libations, to descant on Shakspeare, and the mode of representing his great characters; which he did eloquently, and to the delight of a large company. Suddenly, to the astonishment of them all, he jumped up, and exclaimed,

"Who among you sent me that damn'd anonymous letter?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Cooke?"

"You know what I mean. What have I done to offend you? Have I not treated ye all with more respect than ye deserved? And now to have a charge of so base a nature made against me!"

"What do you complain of, Mr. Cooke?"

"Sir, I am accused of falsehood. I am accused of making false assertions. I have received an anonymous letter containing this line alone, 'Justify your words.' Sir, my words are truth. What have I said, that I cannot justify? I have, perhaps, been too keen upon the character of your country, but truth is the severest satire upon it. I am ready to justify what I have said!"

"Mr. ——, seeing his company thrown into confusion, and all harmony broken up, arose and expostulated with his guest, and finally hinted that the anonymous letter was a creation of his heated imagination. Cooke then resumed his seat, and fixing his eye on his host for some time, exclaimed, "I have marked you, Sir! I have had my eye upon you; it is time that your impertinence should be curbed."

This excessive licentiousness of speech, with the peculiar manner of the speaker, appeared so ludicrous, that the company burst into loud laughter, and Cooke, changing his manner, joined heartily with them, and again resumed his glass.

Some time after, a gentleman told him, that it was reported that Mr. Madison, the President of the United States, purposed to come from Washington to Baltimore, to see him act.

" If he does, I'll be damn'd if I play before him. What! I! George Frederick Cooke! who have acted before the majesty of Britain, play before your yankee president! No!—I'll go forward to the audience, and I'll say Ladies and gentlemen—"

Here he was interrupted playfully by Mr. W——, who happened to be dressed in black—

" Oh, no, Mr. Cooke, that would not be right in this country; you should say, friends and fellow-citizens.

Cooke, surveying him contemptuously, cried, " Hold your tongue, you damn'd methodist preacher," and then proceeded—" Ladies and gentlemen, the king of the yankee doodles has come to see me act; me, *me*, George Frederick Cooke! who have stood before my royal master George the Third, and received his imperial approbation! And shall I exert myself to play before one of his rebellious subjects, who arrogates kingly state in defiance of his master? No, it is degradation enough to play before rebels; but I'll not go on for the amusement of a king of rebels, the contemptible king of the yankee doodles!"

This effusion only excited laughter, and he went on to expatiate on his deeds of arms in the war against the rebels, and every place in the neighbourhood where an action had been fought, was the scene of his military achievements.

His garrulity led him to talk of his domestic affairs, and to lament that he had no children; but shortly after, filling a bumper, he proposed the health of his eldest son, a captain in the fifth.

"What is his name, Mr. Cooke?"

"What is my name, Sir? George Frederick Cooke."

A short time after, his second son was proposed with a bumper.

"What is his name, Mr. Cooke?"

"What should it be, Sir, but George Frederick Cooke?"

With difficulty he was prevailed upon to get into a coach to return home to Baltimore. Still it was necessary that some one should attend him, and late at night, his host performed that kind office. This offended Cooke, and he began to abuse him, and every thing belonging to the country. This gentleman observing a stump of a tree near the wheel-track, as they passed through a grove, cautioned the coachman. "What, Sir, do you pretend to direct my servant?" cries Cooke. His companion humoured him, by apologizing; but seeing the coachman driving too near the edge of a bridge, he again spoke to him—

"This is too much," cries Cooke, "get out of my coach, Sir!—out—stop, coachman!"

"Drive on!"

"Get out! Do you order my coachman? Get out, or this fist shall—"

Mr. ——, who had been told Cooke's character, interrupted him, by exclaiming,

"Sit still, Sir, or I'll blow your brains out this instant."

Cooke was petrified, and sat like a statue—but soon began with "Has George Frederick Cooke come to this damn'd country to be treated thus? Shall it be told in England!—Well, Sir, if you will not get out, I will," and he opened the door. Mr. H—— was obliged to stop the coach, for fear of injury to Cooke, who tumbled himself out, and surlily sat down under a tree. With great difficulty his opposition was overcome, and Mr. H——, near daylight, got rid of his troublesome and turbulent guest, by depositing him at his lodgings.

Thus in every city the disposition to honour his talents was opposed by his unhappy habits, and it was found, that whatever he once might have been, he was no longer an agreeable associate for gentlemen, unless the bottle was kept out of sight.

But enough, and perhaps too much, on this subject. I fear that I have been too minute in my details of the mad pranks and consequent eccentricities of the subject of my story. Perhaps it was necessary for the illustration of his extraordinary character, and perhaps, from the knowledge of them so generally diffused, it was expected from me. I will, however, decline any further detail of such scenes, from a conviction, that as much has been said as is necessary for the above purpose, or can be useful for any *moral* purpose.

On Mr. Cooke's return, he stopped a few days at Philadelphia, and arrived in New-York on the 19th of June. On the next evening, June 20th, he was married by the Rev. Mr. Barry, to Mrs. Behn, daughter of Mr. James Bryden, who proved to him a faithful helpmate, and affectionate nurse to the day of his death.

He played Sir Pertinax on the 24th of June, to a house of 794 dollars. Kitely, on the 26th, to 697 dollars, and for the last time of playing that season, Richard, on the 1st of July, to 657 dollars, The amounts of these three houses prove a renewed attraction; for at this warm season of the year, when the theatre has been opened for many months, nothing of the ordinary kind can produce half the ordinary expenses, except on the great national holiday, the 4th of July.

Mr. and Mrs. Cooke passed the remainder of the summer, in excursions to various parts of the country within the state of New-York, of which he has left the following memorandum, in the last journal he ever attempted to keep.

"On Wednesday the 3d, (July,) crossed the East River to Brooklyn, on Long-Island; dined at Jamaica, 10 m. and arrived at 10 at night, the driver having mistook his road, at Far Rockaway, a short distance from the sea, at Mr. Tyler's whom I had formerly known an actor in England, and who now keeps an inn at the latter place. From Brooklyn to Rockaway, 24 miles. On Saturday, rode to Hampstead, a mean inconsiderable village, and on the morning of Sunday, left Mr. Tyler's after breakfast, and reached New-York to dinner; the weather very sultry and hot.

"On Saturday the 13th, at five in the afternoon, took my departure from New-York in a Steam-Boat (the Car of Neptune). This was the first time of my sailing in a vessel of that description. She was of great length, the accommodations good, but rendered disagreeable by being crowded with passengers.

Wind and tide being against us,* we had no assistance but from the steam, and did not reach Albany, (165 miles,) until two o'clock on Monday morning. Before dinner on Sunday, a passenger, I presume a Methodist, favoured us with what he thought a suitable discourse. I went on shore, and to bed at the Eagle Inn. The fare, including diet, from New-York to Albany, seven dollars. The views, on both sides of the North, or Hudson's River, are pleasing, and romantic, and picturesque.

"On the 21st, I visited a fall on the Mohawk river, not far from the place of its junction with the Hudson, some miles above the city of Albany. The Fall is called the *Cahoes*. About ten miles above Albany, we passed a wooden bridge over the Mohawk, and dined at Waterford, at a well furnished inn, *the table excepted.* We afterwards passed another wooden bridge over the Hudson, and riding through Lansingburgh, a neat village, stopped at Troy, a small town, where I *again* dined. To arrive at Albany I once more crossed the Hudson, and regained the Eagle about dusk, after rather a pleasant day's excursion.

"On the 22d, I left Albany as a residence, and on the opposite side of the river took up my abode at the Washington Hotel, in the village of Greenbush. Opposite to my apartment is a water-fall of sixty feet, the water of which turns a mill about a mile from the village.

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* Certainly not the tide against them for 33 hours. The passage is usually made by these wonderful machines in 24 or 26 hours.

" Greenbush, Monday, July 29th, 1811. Paid the expenses of a week, from Monday the 22d, 21dol. 87½ cents."

This, it will be observed, is the expense of himself and Mrs. Cooke at a tavern. He proceeds:

" Crossed to Albany, went to the reading-room, and exchanged some books. On my return, found a letter apprising me of Mr. Doige's death, who, a part of the last winter, belonged to the New-York theatre. He came from England at the time I did, but I never saw or heard of him there. He died in Albany on Saturday night."

With the utmost propriety, and in the spirit of true benevolence, Mr. Cooke takes no notice of his own conduct towards this unhappy man.

Mr. Doige died of dropsy, and owed the alleviation of those miseries which attend the last stages of disease, to the attentions and liberality of Mr. Cooke.

Some instances of the profusion of Mr. Cooke I have recorded, many more have been related to me; the instances of his honourable and benevolent liberality, might have been related to me, in all probability, in still greater numbers; but he recorded them not himself, and by others they are forgotten.

> "The evil that men do, lives after them:
> "The good is oft interred with their bones."

On Thursday, August 1st, I find my hero in the reading-room at Albany.

"Read 'English Bards, and Scottish Reviewers,' by Lord Byron. It is well written. His Lordship is rather severe, perhaps justly so, on Walter Scot, and most assuredly justly severe upon Monk Lewis.

"After breakfast a person from Lancaster, in England, accosted me. He said he would have gone five hundred miles to see me! How fortunate that I came in his way!—I thought of the high-flown Spanish compliment; 'May you live a thousand years.'

"Looked into, and walked round, the Capitol. Sauntered, and about half past two sat down to dinner, at the Eagle, with the landlord and four or five-and-twenty others. At some time of the night under guidance of one of the waiters, recrossed the river, and got to bed. I cannot tell how it was expended, but brought home thirty-two dollars short of what I carried out."

On Friday, the 2d of August, he received a visit from Messrs. Price, Simpson, and Hilson, who came from Lebanon Springs to see him. Further memoranda:

"Monday, August 12th, crossed the river, and soon after ten left Albany in a carriage and pair. Dined on the bank of the Mohawk, which after dinner I crossed on a wooden bridge, and arrived before six at Sans Souci Hotel, Ballston Springs. Supped in my own apartment. Afterwards walked about the village; drank a glass of water at the upper spring. Met with Mr. William Bates, whom I had not seen these eighteen years.

"Wednesday the 14th, left Ballston for Saratoga Springs, seven miles. Dined with the company. Remained at Lewis's Hotel three days and a half, indisposed. On Sunday evening, the 18th, took an airing of three hours, and had a partial view of Saratoga Lake. On Monday removed to Glen's Falls, eighteen miles, and was rather disappointed in my expectations. Met and dined with some company who were with us in the steam-boat. After dinner proceeded to Lake George, nine miles, a great part of the way very bad. Stopped at Bellevue, an excellent inn kept by Mr. Carter. The neatness of the house and pleasantness of the situation, with the cheerful, plain politeness and attention of the whole family, equal any thing of the kind that I ever met.

"The Lake is a handsome piece of water,

interspersed with several beautiful Islands. From the head of Lake Champlain, into which it falls, about thirty-five miles, but not broad in proportion. When in possession of the French, it was called Lake Sacrament. On the right, as you approach the head of the Lake, are the ruins of Fort George, and near them, the site of Fort William Henry.

"On Friday, the 23d, after breakfast, I left both the situation and the family, with regret, and proceeded to Sandy Hill, a pleasant village, twelve miles; where we dined and continued our journey to Saratoga village by way of Fort Edward, a village so called, but I saw no remains of a fortification; sixteen miles. Viewed the field where General Burgoyne surrendered the remains of his army, in 1777, to the Americans, commanded by General Gates.

"Next morning sat out again, and breakfasted about sixteen miles on our road, and eleven miles further, passing through Waterford, arrived to dinner at Troy. Here we crossed the North, or Hudson River, along whose banks we had travelled all this, and the preceding day, and returned to Albany. Saratoga Lake falls into the Hudson, near the field of surrender.

"While at Lake George, I read the "Missionary," a romance by Miss Owenson,* a young lady who has distinguished herself in that species of writing. I met her in London, and was acquainted with her father in Ireland. He belonged to the Dublin Theatre, and some years ago to Covent Garden.

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* Now Lady Morgan.

" On Saturday, the 31st of August, I sat out in the ' Car of Neptune' steam-boat for New-York, and arrived there on Sunday, the 1st of September, about two P. M. The Theatre opened the next day."

CHAP. XXXIV.

Mr. Cooke Plays in New-York—Goes to Philadelphia in November, 1811, *and Plays—In December plays again in New-York—Engagement for Charleston, South Carolina—Goes to Boston, and Plays there till the 7th Feb.* 1812*—Takes his Passage from Boston to England, but comes to New-York—Goes to Providence, Rhode Island, in July, and Plays Nine Nights—To Boston—To New-York, Sept.* 1812*—Letter from Mr. W. Harris, inviting Mr. Cooke to return to Covent Garden.*

On Mr. Cooke's return to New-York he took up his abode at Mrs. Noe's boarding-house in Nassau-street, and continued to occupy the same apartments, when in this city, until July, 1812.

He opened on the second of September in Glenalvon, Mr. Cooper playing Douglas, and they acted together in such plays as had characters suited to their respective talents, until Mr. Cooke departed to play, for the second time, in Philadelphia.

On the 4th he played Richard; on the 6th

Iago; on the 9th King John, Mr. Cooper acting Falconbridge. On the 11th he acted Clytus and Sir Archy; on the 13th Kitely; and on the 16th Stukely.

He was advertised for Falstaff on the 18th, but he sent word he would not come, and the managers had to change the play to John Bull. He did not play again until the 25th, when Othello was performed, he and Mr. Cooper playing their accustomed characters, and Mrs. Darley the innocent and interesting Desdemona. This lady returned, after a long absence from the New-York stage, again to give public pleasure, enhanced by the knowledge of her domestic world, to that audience who had for years admired her talents.

On the 27th Mr. Cooke played Shylock and Sir Archy; on the 30th Pierre; on the 2d Oct. King Henry the 8th; and on the 4th Sir Pertinax. He was advertised for Henry the 8th on the 7th, but was indisposed, and the play was changed.

On the 18th the bills announced, that Mr. Cooke having recovered from his late *serious* indisposition, "Richard the Third" would be performed; and he played Richard.

On the 21st he played Falstaff; on the 23d King John; on the 25th Sir Pertinax; on the 28th Iago; on the 30th Penruddock; on the 1st of November Lear, the bills giving notice that it was the last night but one of Mr. Cooke's performance.

The 4th of November was his last night (for the present) and benefit. He played Sir Pertinax.

On the 7th of November he left New-York for Philadelphia, and opened there on Friday evening, the 8th. He says:

"Commenced my second engagement at Philadelphia with Richard the Third. Although the night was cold and wet, a numerous audience, and usual reception."

The house was .... *Dollars*	917
Next night, Nov. 9th, Man of the World	780
Nov. 11*th*, Lear	675
13*th*, Macbeth	729
15*th*, Wheel of Fortune	733
16*th*, Richard	700
18*th*, 1st part of Henry 4th	622
20*th*, Merchant of Venice, and Love a-la-Mode	1175
22*d*, Man of the World	1115
23*d*, New Way to Pay Old Debts	646
25*th*, King John	541
27*th*, Merchant of Venice, and Love a-la-Mode	1041
29*th*, Richard, for Mr. Cooke's benefit	1129
30*th*, Man of the World:—Mr. Wood's benefit	571

During this visit to Philadelphia, Mr. Cooke had an offer of an engagement from Messrs. Pepin and Breschard, who having, with a troop of cavalry, laid the principal towns of the United States under contribution, had lately erected in this city an amphitheatre, and were preparing to exhibit plays. Mr. Pepin waited on Mr. Cooke, and made known his business. Cooke very gravely thanked him for the intended honour, and concluded with assuring him that he "never had been taught to ride."

Mr. Cooke returned from Philadelphia, and re-commenced playing in New-York, on the 6th of December, 1811. "Othello:" cast as before.

About this time the writer dissolved his connexion with the theatre; and, in consequence, had less intercourse with Mr. Cooke than before, though it is to be remembered that, except in Philadelphia, that intercourse had never led to a personal knowledge of Mr. Cooke's hours of privacy. I still occasionally visited him, and he very politely and cheerfully sat to me for several portraits in miniature, which being esteemed, on account of their faithful representation of his features, and expression of his character, assisted me in my new profession of miniature painting.

Dec. 9th, Mr. Cooke played Stukely with Mr. Cooper's Beverly. On the 11th he played Sir Pertinax.

The bills of the 13th December were headed thus: "The public is respectfully informed, that Mr. Cooke will perform in New York but FOUR NIGHTS MORE, after which he departs immediately for CHARLESTON, from whence he takes passage to England." On this night, the first of the four, he played Macbeth. On the 14th he played Shylock, and on the 16th Sir Pertinax. The 17th was announced as positively his last night of performance in New-York.

That Mr. Cooke had engaged himself to the managers of the Charleston theatre, in South Carolina, Messrs. Green, Twaits, and Placide, there is no doubt; but instead of going South to perform, he travelled North, to play in the Boston theatre, the managers of which, as we have seen, had had their share of disappointment before.

Mr. Powell, on this occasion, took the wise precaution of coming on to New-York; and, to secure his prize, kept in company. The manager and actor embarked in a Rhode Island packet, but a violent snow storm drove the vessel for shelter into the port of New-London, where they landed, after some bodily and more mental sufferings. Cooke protested against a re-embarkation, and determined on a little earthly enjoyment before he commenced the journey by land. The day was fixed for opening in Boston, and Mr. Powell, forgetting his caution, left the actor at New-London, and proceeding to Boston, advertised Richard for the night appointed; but Richard was in good winter-quarters at New-London, and not inclined to take the field. The consequence was, that the manager had to retrace his steps to New-London, and attend, as many a manager had before done, in the *suite* of the hero of Bosworth.

He opened in Boston on Tuesday, the 31st of December, and played Richard the Third to a house of Doll.761 37½

Jan. 1*st*, 1812, *Wednesday*, Merchant of Venice	593	87½
3*d*, *Friday*, Man of the World	811	
6*th*, *Monday*, 1st part Hen. IV.	703	62½
8*th*, *Wednesday*, Othello	838	37½
9*th*, *Thursday*, Wheel of Fortune	736	50
10*th*, *Friday*, Venice Preserved and Love a-la-Mode	854	25

This statement is furnished by the politeness of Mr. Powell, who goes on to say:

"The rage," for seeing Mr. Cooke, "was at this period so great, that though it was the depth of winter and excessively cold, the box-office has been surrounded from three o'clock in the morning until the time of its opening, which was ten. People were employed, at considerable expense, by gentlemen, who could not attend themselves, to procure boxes. Mr. Cooke was taken seriously ill, and could not appear the following week; this was a material injury to the remainder of his engagement. Various reports were industriously circulated respecting his absence, but the real cause was a real attack of a bilious complaint.

"He made his re-appearance on

	Dollars.	
Jan. 20*th*, *Monday*, Merchant of Venice	470	50
22*d*, *Wednesday*, New Way to Pay Old Debts	417	62½
23*d*, *Thursday*, Revenge	520	12½
24*th*, *Friday*, Richard (Mr. Cooke's night)	704	75
27*th*, *Monday*, Macbeth	609	50
28*th*, *Tuesday*, New Way, &c.	451	50
29*th*, *Wednesday*, Revenge	365	37½
31*st*, *Friday*, Lear	557	
Feb. 3*d*, *Monday*, Othello	376	25
5*th*, *Wednesday*, Merchant of Venice and Love a-la-Mode	658	37½
6*th*, *Thursday*, Lear	513	75
7*th*, *Friday*, Macbeth (Mr. Cooke's night)	696	25

"Mr. Cooke was engaged this season at 3200 dollars."

Mr. Powell adds, that after his commencement he "never occasioned a postponement to my knowledge but once, and that was owing to real illness."

It appears, from the whole of this statement, that Mr. Cooke's conduct on this second visit to the capital of the state of Massachusetts, was such as redounded to his honour, and left a favourable and lasting impression on the minds of the managers. He at this time acted for himself.

On his return to New-York I called upon him, and he told me that he had taken his passage for England, in a ship to sail from Boston in a few days; that he had left his baggage in that town, and should return thither to embark as soon as he had settled his accounts in New-York.

His plans were, however, soon changed, and he remained in New-York until July 5th; and, during all this time, played but six nights.

On the 16th of March the bills of the theatre were headed,

"Mr. COOKE is engaged for five nights. In consequence of which the theatre will be re-opened."

On the first night of the five he played Sir Pertinax: on the 18th of March, Iago: on the 20th, Richard the Third: on the 23d, Iago and Sir Archy: and for his benefit, the last night of this short engagement, Falstaff, in 1st part of Henry IV.

He did not play again until the 22d of June. The bills of that day were headed thus:

"Last week but one. Mr. Darley's benefit.

"The Managers have great pleasure in informing the public they have engaged Mr. COOKE FOR THREE NIGHTS, who will make his first appearance on Monday evening, for the benefit of Mr. Darley, in the character of Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant."

On this night he was very ill, and it was with difficulty he got through. He declined fulfilling the engagement, as he was too weak and unwell. There were in the house about 460 dollars.

This was the last appearance of George Frederick Cooke on the stage of the city of New-York.

Previous to this last engagement, he had confined himself to his bed for days and weeks at a time. In one instance he was eight weeks in bed, only getting up to have it made, and that generally in the night. He ate and drank, and was at times perfectly cheerful, but he would not get up. He complained of giddiness when he made the attempt; and generally of pain in the breast and abdomen. The disease of his liver was, doubtless, increasing, as well as the dropsical symptoms.

Between the time of his return from Boston and his playing in March, he was once at my painting-room, and sat for the finishing of the portrait which accompanies this work. He was very cheerful and pleasant, and made an agreement with me to sit for a picture in the character of Richard, which was to be commenced the next day, and an hour appointed at which I should call for him and lend him my arm to my room, the streets being at the time covered with ice, and his limbs not so firm as they had been. I called, but he was in bed; and I repeated my calls until I was tired, and gave it up; for he could not make the effort to get up until some time after.

It will be seen from the above how his time was passed in New-York on this occasion. During his previous visit in December, 1811, I have many memorandums of his erratic behaviour, which, though amusing to his companions at the time, are not necessary, after what has been said, to elucidate his character, and would afford little pleasure in the writing or reading. His companions were gentlemen much younger than himself, and they did not hesitate, in the moments of gaiety, to encourage those eccentricities in his conduct, which added to the mirth, though not to the respectability, of those concerned. His habit of romancing and imagining himself other than he was, or attributing to himself imaginary actions, was encouraged; dialogues entered into with the same spirit; mock quarrels begun and continued until a duel was pronounced necessary to wipe off the stains his words had occasioned: a duel would accordingly be fought; and the gentlemen highly delighted with *quizzing* Cooke, were only the dupes of his whim, of *affecting to treat as real that which he was conscious was mere sport:* a propensity which I have before mentioned, and which he has himself recorded.

As an instance: In a large company he began to descant on the manners of the country, and asserted that he had not been idle since his arrival in it: that he was in the habit of putting down his observations and remarks, and that on his return to England he should publish such a satirical picture of the country and its inhabitants, as had never been seen of any other part of the globe. One of the quizzers, affecting to take all this as serious, remarks;

"What a fine field, Sir, the politics of the country will afford you!"

Cooke, determined on opposition, and assuming the part of an author, replies: "I shall not touch on the politics of the country. Manners, customs, characters, are my aim, and the satirist has ample field, heaven knows!"

"But, Sir, the politics—the divisions—the dissentions—"

"No, Sir! I shall avoid the subject altogether. In the first place, as a stranger, I am an incompetent judge; and, in the second place, the subject itself is uninteresting, if not contemptible. But there is scope enough for satire without touching the political office hunters. Satirical I *must* be, for truth is *here* the *severest* satire."

"But, Mr. Cooke, you *must* notice public speakers, and that will lead to the politics of the country."

"Must, Sir! No, Sir! not at all, Sir! There are subjects enough in your lawyers and judges, and your stupid actors, and more stupid managers, for all I need say of public institutions. I have already filled volumes."

"But, Sir, you must say something—"

"*Must* again, Sir! Why *must* I, Sir? Is there not enough to remark on, when I have before me the impertinent manners of every scoundrel I meet?"

The quizzer now demands satisfaction, and insists on an apology, and appeals to the company, who unanimously decide that Mr. Cooke must apologize, or fight.

"I will not apologize: young gentleman, I will fight you, but if I fight you, I shall shoot you—I am the best shot in Europe—if you *insist upon it* I will shoot you; I would not willingly shed blood: but I never apologize."

"Then let it be immediately."

While pistols are brought, and apparently preparing, he talks of his courage, his skill, and the many who have fallen before him, especially when he was in the *fifth*, and serving in America: upon which another quizzer points out a gentleman present, about thirty years of age, as the colonel of the fifth in the year 1775; and Cooke very seriously appeals to this colonel, as the judge of his merit as a soldier. And yet these gentlemen supposed that *they* were quizzing Cooke.

On another occasion, the whole routine of a duel was carried through, pistols loaded and discharged, the antagonist prostrated at Mr. Cooke's feet, and he wounded on the shoulder by cutting his clothes with a pen-knife, he playing his part to the last, and occasionally satirizing his companions; and yet the story is told as a *quiz* upon *Cooke*.

There is no other proof needed, that Mr. Cooke knew that these quarrels were not real, than his submitting to the last appeal; for no man was more impressed with the value of that most valuable truth, "the better part of valour is discretion."

In opposition to this opinion, I know that the fact may be urged, of his having ordered the coat which he wore in the last *duel* to be kept in its wounded state; forbidding any attempt to repair the injury it had received by the fictitious pistol-ball; and never retracting what he had first asserted, on his coming home, respecting the duel, as a real and serious transaction. But this, when taken in connexion with Mr. Cooke's character, amounts to nothing. He undoubtedly knew that he had never been an "ensign in the fifth," or carried the British standard at the battles of Bunker-Hill and Brooklyn; but having assumed that character, he supported it whenever opportunity offered, and played the hero of the heights of Brooklyn and Brede, with the same spirit of identification as the hero of Bosworth. The principal difference was, that in the last he spoke the imaginings of another, and in the first "played *extempore*," like his great prototype. So in the case of the duel; he certainly knew that he had neither been wounded himself, nor wounded his antagonist. He knew his own shoulder was well, and next day saw his opponent in perfect health; but whenever the circumstance was alluded to, he assumed the part he had undertaken, and talked of having shot his friend with all the *sang-froid* of a real duellist.

These remarks would be trifling if they did not elucidate a fact in the history of the *mind*. The indulgence of that propensity, which all mankind feel, or have felt, to assume imaginary characters, and imagine actions suitable to the assumption; to indulge in what is sometimes called *reverie*, and sometimes *castle-building*, has a tendency to strengthen imagination, and injure the judgment, and when further encouraged by habits of ebriation, becomes a species of real insanity.

On Sunday, the 5th of July, 1812, Mr. and Mrs. Cooke sat off from New-York in the Providence (Rhode Island) Packet, and arrived at that place on the Wednesday following.

He played at Providence with the Boston company nine nights, beginning on Monday, July 13th.

First night, Merchant of Venice, *Doll.*	268	50
July 15*th*, *Wednesday*, Richard	286	
17*th*, *Friday*, Man of the World .	227	50
20*th*, *Monday*, Macbeth	259	
22*d*, *Wednesday*, Wheel of Fortune, and Love a-la-Mode	165	75
24*th*, *Friday*, Revenge	198	
27*th*, *Monday*, Lear.............	157	
29*th*, *Wednesday*, Henry 4th	93	50

On Friday, the 31st of July, 1812, Mr. Cooke played Sir Giles Over-reach, in Massinger's comedy of A New Way to Pay Old Debts, for his own benefit. The amount was 285 dollars, which, I presume, was as much as the house would hold. This was the last time Mr. Cooke ever played.

His engagement at this time was to share equally after 150 dollars, and have a clear benefit; so that these nine nights, in a country town, yielded him 574 dollars.

Mr. Powell says, "during the time he was in Providence, although he lived three quarters of a mile from the theatre, he would walk to and from it every morning. I do not recollect his absenting himself even from *one rehearsal.*"

In August, Mr. and Mrs. Cooke visited Boston for a few days, and then returned to Providence. They arrived in New-York the beginning of September.

Mr. Cooke now took up his abode in Mechanic Hall, where shortly after Mr. Holmes and his daughter became inmates with him.

During this summer, or in the latter part of the spring, Mr. Cooke received the following invitation to return to London, from the son of his old friend Harris.

"*Covent Garden Theatre, March* 18*th,* 1812.

"My dear Sir,

"My father has written a letter to you, inviting a return to your old quarters at Covent Garden, where you would receive the most cordial welcome.

"For fear his letter should not come to hand, I write this, repeating his request, and I hope that, on the receipt of it, you will take leave of the yankees, and come over and take t'other touch at John Bull, who is as fond of you as ever, and would be most happy to see his favourite again. Believe me, your's, very sincerely,

"W. HARRIS."

CHAP. XXXV.

The Loss of Mr. Cooke felt severely by the English Dramatic World—Mr. C. Kemble's Iago—Mr. Grant's Sir Pertinax—Mr. Cooke's last Illness and Death—Letter from Dr. Hosack—Some Remarks on Mr. Cooke's Disposition, Genius, Taste, and Acting—Iago—Sir Pertinax—Richard—Macbeth—Mr. Cooke's Orthoëpy—Marked Part of Octavian—Three Anecdotes—Conclusion.

THE above letter, the eloquence of which was deemed sufficient to induce Mr. Cooke to "take leave of the yankees, and come over and take t'other touch at John Bull," proves that the absence of my hero was sensibly felt, both by the public and by Mr. Harris. Many of the best plays in the language were no longer to be seen; or, if seen, only reminded the spectator of the loss he had sustained. Richard and Kitely, Sir Giles Over-reach and Sir John Falstaff, Iago and Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant, Lear and Sir Archy M'Sarcasm, were without adequate representation; and comedy, as well as tragedy, mourned the absence of Cooke.

Where, as in some of these pieces, one prominent character attracted all the attention, there was for some time no attempt to perform the play; but "Othello" giving scope for two great actors, the loss of the favourite might be supposed more supportable. In the month of December following Mr. Cooke's departure, Othello was played. Mr. Kemble, who had attempted Iago in 1806-7, when Mr. Cooke was absent, now, as the burnt child dreads the fire, kept aloof; and his brother, Mr. Charles Kemble, was thrust into the part, only to experience the mortification resulting from reproof.

Some other futile attempts have been made of the same kind, but the greatest temerity was shown by an actor of the name of Grant, who, "neck or nothing," made his appearance in December, 1811, in the character of Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant. As it is certainly possible that a Cooke or a Garrick may appear again, it will not be impertinent to observe, that Mr. Grant failed.

I return with reluctance to Mr. Cooke at Mechanic Hall, where the progress of those diseases, which had long before fastened their fangs upon him, was now rapid, and threatened a speedy termination of his eventful life.

Happily for him, the hour of acute pain and mortal illness had not found him struggling with poverty, or harassed by creditors; he enjoyed all that affluence can bestow to alleviate disease; and had every attention paid to him, which kind and skilful physicians, sympathizing friends, and above all, a faithful and exemplary nurse in the person of Mrs. Cooke, could devise or bestow.

The strength of his iron constitution was gone; no skill could arrest the approach of death, and on the 26th September, 1812, George Frederick Cooke breathed his last, aged 57 years and 5 months.

Among the persons he remembered with particular affection on his death-bed, were Mr. Harris, Mr. Charles Kemble, and Mr. Brandon. A ring which had been given to him by Mr. Charles Kemble, he desired might be sent to him, and the assurance of his affectionate remembrance to the three. His book of "*The Man of the World*," with the part of *Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant* marked, has been sent, since his death, to Mr. John Philip Kemble; with what intent I know not.

I owe to the kind politeness of Dr. Hosack, the following letter on the subject of Mr. Cooke's diseases, last illness, and death.

"*New York*, *March* 16, 1813.

"DEAR SIR,

"Upon referring to my memoranda of the illness and death of Mr. Cooke, I find I have very little to communicate that will prove interesting to your readers, except to those who feel an interest in whatever relates to that distinguished character. His case does not, like that of his predecessor Garrick, repay the physician for its perusal, by the communication of an important medical truth;* nor, like that of Macklin, does it *directly* illustrate the effects of regularity and temperance, in attaining to great length of days;† but it adds another lamented example, to the long catalogue of those who have prematurely fallen the victims of intemperance; for by this species of *suicide*, as it ought to be denominated, Mr. Cooke destroyed one of the best constitutions, both of mind and body, that man could have possessed. You observe I withhold nothing; but disclose the whole truth. I trust, as his biographer, this you also will do; for, to be a true portrait, the picture should have its shades and back-ground.

"It will be proper to observe, that on his passage from Europe to this country, Mr. Cooke was indisposed by an inflammatory fever, with which he was attacked two weeks after he left England. It ended in a deranged state of the bowels, attended with costiveness, hemorrhoids, and occasional discharges of blood.

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* See Murphy's Life of Garrick, vol. ii. p. 335.

† Kirkman's Life of Macklin, vol. ii., p. 438.

"During his convalescence from that illness he was deprived of his accustomed spirituous drinks; for by the length of the voyage, the liquors of the ship had been all expended, when he was compelled to confine himself to water. This privation, though discomfiting to Mr. Cooke, produced a very salutary change in his constitution, for he arrived in the most perfect state of health.

"Mr. Cooke landed in New-York on the 16th of November, and took lodgings at the Tontine Coffee-house, from whence, in a few days, he removed to the family of Mr. Price, the manager of the theatre.

"His fame having preceded him, his society was immediately sought for by the lovers of the drama, and those who were acquainted with his professional excellence. Notwithstanding the temptations to indulgence, to which he now necessarily became exposed, he observed, with very few exceptions, great abstinence and regularity until the month of December. In the mean time, he completed his theatrical engagements in this city, without the least imputation of excess. I am informed, but whether correctly or not, your constant intercourse with Mr. Cooke will enable you to state,* that during the whole period of his engagement, he was so rigidly abstemious, that on the days of playing he regularly left the table at five o'clock, and prepared for his evening exercises; with the exception of his benefit-night, when, indeed, as Sempronius wished,

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* My Statement the reader already has.—W. D.

> " ——— the storm blew high,
> " And spent itself on Cato's head.*

" Having terminated his engagement in New-York, Mr. Cooke proceeded to Boston. On his journey to and from that city, he endured much fatigue and distress from the roughness of the roads, the rapidity with which he travelled, and the coldness of the season, which was more severe during that winter than we usually experience in the United States.

" Of the weather, Mr. Cooke especially complained, and to it ascribed many of his sufferings which ensued. But in addition to these sources of his disease, it is also to be remarked, that he had returned to the same habits of excess that, for many years before, he had indulged in Europe. The consequence was, a severe and alarming indisposition.

" I was first requested to see Mr. Cooke on the 13th of March, 1811; but his friend Dr. Hugh M'Lean, an eminent physician of this city, informed me, that previously to my attendance, he had prescribed for him during several less severe attacks, of what he considered approaching apoplexy, but which were readily removed by blood-letting, and other depleting remedies.

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* The tragedy of Cato was performed on the night of Mr. Cooke's benefit.

"When I was first called to Mr. Cooke, I found him in a state of stupor, unable to converse, or to communicate to me any account either of feelings, or the causes of his distress.

"He also laboured under great oppression of the chest, which was manifested by a hurried and anxious respiration. These symptoms were attended with a full and frequent pulse, a heated skin, a furred tongue, and other evidences of excitement and general plethora. I also learned from his attendants that, for some days before, he had been indulging in his wine, his favourite beverage, much more freely than usual.

"Considering his complaints to be the result of an unusual fulness of his habit, and the too liberal use of stimulant drinks, I immediately directed twenty ounces of blood to be taken from his arm. By this evacuation, followed by an active cathartic, he was in a few hours sensibly relieved. In the evening of the same day, he had so far recovered from the oppression, both of his brain and lungs, that he conversed with me very freely of his situation, and the causes that had induced it. He then informed me, that prior to his confinement to bed, he had also complained of pain in his right side, referring it more immediately to the region of the liver; he, however, at that time, wanted some of the characteristic symptoms of an acute inflammation of that organ.

" I observed that his spirits were greatly depressed whenever he conversed upon the subject of his complaints; for he had now become conscious of the nature of his disease, and appeared to be fully apprized of the consequences, if he could not command fortitude enough to abstain from the causes that had produced it. In one of those moments of despondency he asked me, with an earnestness and solicitude of manner which I can never forget, if I thought his disease had proceeded to such a degree as likely to prove fatal to him; and if I then considered him in *immediate* danger; adding, that in such case, he was desirous of making some communication to one or two persons in England, and particularly referred to his old friend, an eminent surgeon of London, James Wilson, Esq., of Windmill-street, of whom he always expressed himself in terms of the greatest affection and respect.

" Upon assuring him that he was, for the present, relieved, and that Richard would soon be himself again, his countenance lighted up, and, for the moment, he was re-animated.

" He then became fearful that I had misconstrued the source of his anxiety about his own situation, and with some animation observed, " Doctor, I hope you do not conceive that I ask you these questions because I am *afraid of dying*—be assured I am not." Notwithstanding this assurance, however, I was convinced that Mr. Cooke was not so firmly steeled upon this subject as he would wish us to believe; on the contrary, he had his share of that '*cowardice*' which generally attaches itself to human nature at the approach of dissolution, for

> " Conscience does make cowards of us all."

" Perceiving, as I believed, the necessity of rallying his spirits, and of counteracting his despondency, whatever may have been the *real* source of it, I instantly replied, ' that it would indeed be strange, if a man who, like Mr. Cooke, had been so much in the *habit of dying*, should be afraid of it.'

" This reply, though trifling in itself, and which by some, perhaps, may be considered as misplaced levity, had the effect I intended as a *medicina mentis;* for it more effectually conveyed my *affected* unconcern for his situation, and imparted more confidence to his mind than the most grave or solemn declaration that I could have expressed.

"In a few days, by attention to his manner of living, Mr. Cooke recovered, and proceeded to Philadelphia.

"During his stay in that city he was so much caressed by his numerous friends and admirers, that we are not surprized to find him again forgetting himself. He accordingly, while in Philadelphia, was obliged to undergo some occasional medical discipline.

"After fulfilling his engagement in that city, he returned to New-York in the month of May. I now found that he had not profited, except in pocket and in fame, by this visit to Philadelphia, for he had brought back with him an increased attachment to his old habits, with less power of resisting them.

"On the 20th of that month I was again called, to witness a similar attack, though in a slighter degree than that in which I had at first attended him; it however was readily removed by mild evacuations.

"Finding now that his repeated excesses, and the means necessary to counteract them, had left him somewhat debilitated, I directed for him a bitter infusion, and other tonic medicines; these, with attention to his diet, greatly improved his appetite and general health.

"Having terminated his theatrical engagements for that season, he passed a great part of the ensuing summer at the springs of Ballston, and in travelling through the northern and western parts of this State.

"About the beginning of the September following, his health being much improved by the excursions of the summer, and his release from professional duty, he returned to the city. The winter campaign which followed, and occasional departures from that temperate system of living which had been enjoined upon him, for he had not sufficient firmness to resist his old enemy, renewed his complaints.

"In the following spring he removed from his lodgings at the Coffee-house, where he had passed the winter, to another part of the town. For some weeks he now lived in the most perfect retirement.

"His friend, Dr. M'Lean, again called upon him, at his new place of residence, and observing Mr. Cooke to manifest some fulness of the abdomen, and swelling of the lower extremities, he immediately endeavoured to alarm him, by expressing, in as strong terms as possible, the consequences which would inevitably ensue, unless he could change his mode of life. For a few weeks this admonition had the most salutary effect. Mr. Cooke immediately abandoned the use of spirituous drinks, except in the form of very weak punch, and which he used in great moderation. He also rose early, and took daily exercise, at the same time that he again occupied his mind in miscellaneous reading, to which, when in health, he was greatly attached. These habits were continued for some weeks, and were followed by the most beneficial changes in his constitution.

" The swelling of his abdomen and extremities were both totally removed. His general health became improved, and his mind recovered its natural strength and cheerfulness. At this time, as was the case upon his first arrival in this country, Mr. Cooke had the most ample evidence of the salutary effects of temperance and exercise, in the removal of his complaints.

" Thus restored, he proceeded in the month of July to Providence, Rhode Island, to fulfil an engagement in that town, and *where he closed his theatrical career*. But upon his arrival in Providence, he unfortunately fell into the society of some kindred spirits, and was again seduced into his former habits. As predicted by Dr. M'Lean, his dropsical complaints immediately returned, and soon increased to so alarming a degree, that it was feared he could not live to return to New-York. He, however, was brought back to this city in September, and took lodgings at the Mechanic Hall, where he remained until his death. Dr. M'Lean visited him on his return, and prescribed for him such diuretics, and other evacuants, as his condition indicated; but his complaints had assumed so formidable an appearance, that the Doctor despaired of his recovery, and expressed his opinion to the friends and connexions of Mr. Cooke. At that time his abdomen had become very much enlarged, attended with great hardness in the region of the liver, and a sensible fluctuation, occasioned by water in the cavity of the belly. His bowels, at the same time, were in a constant state of constipation, except when excited by the most drastic purgatives. His lower extremities were almost anasarcous, and a general yellowness was diffused over the surface of the body, all evidently pointing out the deranged condition of the liver, as well as the debilitated state of his whole system.

" During the period of Dr. M'Lean's attendance, Mr. Cooke was confined to his bed, excepting upon one day, when, by an extraordinary exertion, he left his room for the purpose of dining with his friend Mr. Holman, who had just arrived from England. On the 17th of September I was again called upon to see Mr. Cooke, in consultation with Dr. M'Lean. I immediately visited him, accompanied by Dr. John W. Francis, a young physician with whom I had lately formed a connexion in practice, and who afterwards, by his constant attendance upon

Mr. Cooke, very much contributed to soothe and allay the distresses which he endured in this his last illness. Mr. Cooke's strength was now so far expended, that we found it impossible to prescribe any thing that was likely to prove useful for the removal of his disease; we therefore, from this period, directed our attention chiefly to the relief of particular symptoms, as they occasionally appeared during the progress of his complaint. On the evening of the 25th, he was seized with sickness at the stomach, which was soon succeeded by violent vomiting, and the discharge of a large quantity of black, grumous blood; by this evacuation his strength was suddenly exhausted; but the vomiting was at length allayed by a mixture of laudanum and mint-water, directed for him by Dr. Francis, who remained with him throughout the night, hourly expecting his decease. Mr. Cooke, however, survived until six in the morning, when in the full possession of his mental faculties, and the perfect consciousness of his approaching change, he calmly expired.

"A few hours after his death, having obtained permission from Mrs. Cooke, accompanied by Dr. Francis, I examined the body, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the abdominal viscera, and especially that of the liver. Upon opening the belly, we found it to contain about four quarts of water; but the liver, to our great surprize, did not exceed the usual dimensions of that viscus; it was, however, astonishingly hard, and of a much lighter colour than is natural to that organ; its texture, too, was uncommonly dense, making considerable resistance to the knife; in its internal structure it was so hard and unyielding, that very few traces of its vessels could be found, and the circulation through it had evidently long since ceased to be regularly performed: it exhibited precisely that peculiar *tuberculous* appearance, which was first pointed out by Dr. Baillie of London, in his Morbid Anatomy.* It also deserves to be remarked, that in the case of Mr. Cooke, as in those described by the distinguished anatomist referred to, the tubercles were not confined to the surface, but extended throughout the greater part of the substance of the liver, as I ascertained by making several sections of it in different directions. The other viscera of the abdomen exhibited no departure from their natural condition, either in their structure or appearance.

"Such, Sir, are the most important circumstances which have fallen under my observation relating to the illness and death of Mr. Cooke; whose loss, in his professional character, we all deplore; for in that justly celebrated tragedian were united a quickness of perception — a correctness of judgment — a knowledge of human nature—a flexibility of feature—a strength and variety of voice—a dignity of form—and a majesty of deportment, which singly are seldom met with in the same degree, and still more rarely are combined in any individual.

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* See Baillie's engravings, p. 101, 2.

"With my best wishes for the accomplishment, and success of the work which you have so laudably undertaken,

"I am, with great regard and respect,

"Yours,

"DAVID HOSACK.

"*William Dunlap, Esq.*"

Doctor John W. Francis, Doctor Hosack's associate in practice, who attended Mr. Cooke in his last illness with Messrs. M'Lean and Hosack, and who witnessed his dying moments, has furnished me with the following anecdote connected with the veteran's last exhibition of his favourite character of Richard the Third, in the city of New-York. It was on the 20th of March, 1812. The next day Dr. Francis called upon him, and expressed the pleasure he had received from witnessing the last evening's exhibition.

"Why," says Cooke, "I was not well, and I had forgotten in the day that I was to play at night. I was sitting here very quietly when I was told that I was wanted at the theatre. "For what?" says I. "To play Richard, Sir." "I had no devotion to the deed, but I went. I made out to get through the first act. In the second, Sir, I was somewhat better. In the third act, I began to feel. In the fourth act, I was alive; and in the fifth, I think I may say Richard truly was himself."

Doctor Francis says, that a very short time before his dissolution, he told him that he was born in Westminster. He likewise mentioned his having entered as a midshipman on board a king's ship, when he was fifteen years of age.

The declaration of Mr. Cooke, on his death bed, must put to rest the question respecting his birth-place; and is a confirmation of his repeated assertion when in this country. I am sorry to pluck so brilliant a flower from the wreath which Mr. Philips has woven, to deck his "Emerald Isle;" but that beloved and injured land is so rich in the fruits, as well as flowers of genius, and so free from the mean passion of envy, that she will cheerfully resign her pretensions to Cooke, when convinced that they were founded in error.

The reader will be pleased to find here, the lines of Mr. Philips, above alluded to. After an enumeration of sages, poets, orators, and players, who have reflected lustre on the *green Isle*, the poet proceeds:

* * * * * * *

"The Rival Muses own'd the alternate reign,
With mutual feeling, each their feuds forsook,
Combined their efforts, and created Cooke.
Lord of the soul! magician of the heart!
Pure child of Nature! foster child of Art!
How all the passions in succession rise,
Heave in thy soul, and lighten in thine eyes!
Beguiled by thee, old Time, with aspect blythe,
Leans on his sceptre, and forgets his scythe;
Space yields its distance—ancient glories live,
Ages elapse, remotest scenes revive—
For thee, creation half inverts her reign,
And captive reason wears a willing chain."

On the twenty-seventh of September, his remains were deposited, with all the respect due to departed genius, in the burying ground of St. Paul's church, attended by a great concourse of respectable citizens.

Thus ended the life of George Frederick Cooke; a man endowed by nature with an athletic frame, and vigorous constitution; a mind quick to conceive, and combine; and a heart open to receive every good impression; and strong in its impulse to every good action.

With such a mind, a good early education would have done wonders; and notwithstanding every adverse circumstance and habit, his discrimination was unusually acute, and his taste pure. Specimens have been given of his critical acumen, and of his style; and I have mentioned a poem projected and begun, called the Stage. Besides these literary labours, projected or accomplished, he appears to have had an intention at some period unmarked, to have written for the stage, and, I presume, a tragedy. I find a small manuscript book, entitled, " Materials for the Duke of Mercia.—No. 1." It consists of extracts on the subject of early English history.

The powers of his mind are to be estimated by his excellence in his profession. As an actor, with all his imperfections from omission or commission, he stood towering above his male contemporaries, alone, and unrivalled.

I wish not to recapitulate what I have said on the subject of Mr. Cooke's acting, but rather to seize this opportunity of supplying, in some measure, my omissions.

His powers of discrimination, and his unrivalled manner of adhering to nature in his recitation, has been dwelt upon; but his mode of anticipating, extending, and improving, the conception of his author, has not been remarked, or elucidated. I would give as an instance, his acting in Iago, at that point, where Othello being wrought up to frenzy, kneels to seal his purpose of revenge by a vow; Iago says:

> " Do not rise yet——[IAGO *kneels.*]
> Witness ye ever-burning lights above,—
> Ye elements that close us round about,
> Witness,—that here Iago doth give up
> The execution of his wit, hand, heart,
> To wrong'd Othello's service!—Let him command,
> And to obey, shall be in me remorse,
> What bloody work soever."

They rise, and Othello says:

> " I greet thy love,
> Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
> And will upon the instant put thee to it:
> Within these three days let me hear thee say,
> That Cassio's not alive."

Mr. Cooke used then to start, and the spectator might plainly read in his expressive face, " What, murder my friend, and companion?" —he then covered his face with his hands, and gradually lifting his head, when he withdrew his hands, his face and eyes were turned upward—he then started again, as if remembering the oath he had just taken, and after a second mental struggle, said, as if submitting to necessity, and the obligation imposed on him by his oath—

> " My friend is dead."

How invaluable would it be to actors, if they could have handed down to them clear and minute descriptions of the manner in which the great masters of the art delineated their most effective characters; such a description of the acting of Cooke I cannot give, but it may be of use to some, and gratify, however imperfectly, the curiosity of others, to notice some very few points which I remember. Such as the quick transition from the fawning *boo* of Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant, where, with the right hand upon the breast, and the left expanded with the expression of obsequious humility, even the aukward position of the legs seemed to convey an intended idea of inferiority and servility, to the suddenly assumed, arrogant, and upright position, with which he addressed his dependants, or supposed inferiors; when, with every muscle in rigid action, his head erect, his left hand thrown behind him, and his right advanced in front, the fore-finger alone extended, as dictating with imperious precision his will, the whole man presented the most perfect contrast to what had preceded, and finely displayed the intimate connexion between purse-swollen pride, and the most abject meanness.

I take up Mr. Cooke's *marked* book of Richard the Third, to assist my memory. The edition is *Roach's*, 1802, and the first four lines of Gloster's first speech is in this edition omitted; but on the opposite (otherwise blank) leaf Mr. Cooke has inserted them. I have before remarked the effect which the high pitched tone of his voice produced on his first playing Richard in America when he began this speech; I will now only notice his action. During the first three lines,

> "Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by the sun of York;
> And all the clouds that lower'd upon our house—"

he was without motion, his hands hanging at ease; at the beginning of the fourth,

> "In the deep bosom,"

he lifted the right hand a little, with a gently sweeping motion, and then turning the palm downwards, he continued,

> "Of the ocean——"

and made a short pause; then sinking his hand (the palm parallel with the earth) and his voice at the same time, finished the sentence by the word,

> "—— buried."

The impatient twitching at his sword during King Henry's speech, previous to Gloster's crying,

> "I'll hear no more—"

is the next circumstance that I remember with particular vividness; this, if imitated, might be as great a deformity in another actor as it was a beauty in the acting of Mr. Cooke; all depends upon the perfect unison of the mind and body, and the mind and body being identified with the character. It is needless to say that many passages in which I can remember I cannot describe him. How should I convey an idea of his saying,

"—— the Tower?
"Ay—the Tower—the Tower!"

or of his departure from the importunate Buckingham, with,

"I'm busy—thou troublest me—I'm not i' th' vein."

Richard's scene in the last of the fourth act with Stanley, beginning:

"Well, my lord, what is the news with you?
Stanley. Richmond is on the seas my lord."

Who can forget, that ever heard Mr. Cooke, the burst at,

"There let him sink—and be the seas on him,
White liver'd renegade—what does he there?
Stanley. I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess—"
Gloster. Well, as you guess."

This last line, given in a manner so perfectly contrasted with "there let him sink"—yet with a transition as natural as it was rapid, and the whole soul thrown into the sneering expression of the face and tone of voice, said in the four words such unutterable things as defy language.

Mr. De Wilde has succeeded, perhaps as far as the pencil can succeed, in perpetuating Mr. Cooke's manner of giving this passage.

The following lines of Richard's last speech of the fourth act, as given by Mr. Cooke, are omitted in this edition :

> " And as the wretch, whose fever-weakened joints,
> Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,
> Impatient of his fit, breaks like a fire
> From his fond keeper's arms, and starts away ;
> Even so these war-worn limbs, tho' now grown weak
> From war's disuse, being now enrag'd with war,
> Feel a new fury, and are thrice themselves !"

These lines, not uncommonly fine in themselves, are of infinite consequence to the succeeding " Come forth, my honest sword," &c. and it is by omissions of this kind, made by ignorant editors, or lazy players, that the finest dramas are ruined. The preparatory lines being omitted, the passage, however fine, may come come too abruptly on the auditor, and its effect lost, or perhaps a contrary effect produced.

I cannot describe with sufficient accuracy the playing of the last act—the scene in the tent and the death of Richard; all who saw must remember, and to those who did not see, I have no hope of conveying an adequate idea.

In Macbeth ;

> " Wherefore was that cry ?
> *Sey.* The Queen, my Lord, is dead."

With a suppressed agitation he gave,

> " She should have died ——"

and then, after a pause, with a tone lowered almost to a whisper,

> " —— hereafter."

So, again :

> " —— it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying ——"

he sunk his voice, and with a tone of suppressed feeling, and heart-breaking disappointment, repeated the word :

> "——nothing."

Mr. Cooke's orthoëpy was generally correct, yet he had fallen in with a vile custom of turning the pronoun *thy*, into the article *the*. This is said to be Mr. Kemble's custom likewise, and he has occasionally been lash'd for it, as well as for his other singularities or affectations. Some of our newspaper critics pointed out this impropriety to Mr. Cooke, but he had no notion that he, who had come from the metropolis of England, should be schooled in his native tongue by yankee scribblers, and he stuck to the *the*, though Shakspeare suffered for it—but Shakspeare had little to forgive Cooke !

Mr. Cooke, at one period of his life, undoubtedly studied his profession with great attention, and took more than ordinary pains to render himself perfect, not only in the words and general manner, but in every minute movement of body, and inflection of voice, in those parts, from the just representation of which celebrity was to be gained. I have before me his part, written with his own hand, of Sir Archy M'Sarcasm, in which he has carefully scored the emphatic words, with one and sometimes two or three lines, according to their respective value and importance.

The part of Octavian, which he frequently performed before his coming to London, I also find in his own hand-writing, with notes on the opposite pages, pointing out the proper gestures, and marking the tone with which each passage is to be pronounced. I will present the reader with an extract from it. It is to be observed, that the lines are wrote into one another, probably with a view, by removing one characteristic of verse, to avoid as much as possible, the danger of falling into the common sing-song of persons reciting poetry.

OCTAVIAN.

A. 2d. Enter from the Cave.[*]

"I cannot sleep! the leaves are newly pull'd! and, as my burning body presses them, their freshness mocks my misery! that frets me[†]! and then I could outwatch the Lynx[‡]!—'tis dawn!—thou hot and rolling sun, I rise before thee! for I have twice thy scorching flames within me, and am more restless!—Now to seek my willow! that droops his mournful head across the brook; he is my calendar—I'll score his trunk with one more long, long day of solitude! I shall lose count else in my wretchedness; and that were pity!—[§] Oh, Octavian! where are the times thy ardent nature painted? when fortune smil'd upon thy lusty youth, and all was sunshine? when the look'd-for years, were gaily deck'd with fancy's imagery, while the high blood run frolic through thy veins, and boyhood made thee sanguine? *let 'em vanish!— †Prosperity's a cheat! Despair is honest, and will stick by me steadily!—I'll hug it!—will glut on't.— ‡ Why, the grey-beard tore her from me, even in my soul's fond dotage!—Oh! 'tis pastime now to see men tug at each other's hearts!—I fear not—for my strings are crack'd already!— § I will go prowl— ¶ but look, I meet no fathers— || now willow—**Oh, Floranthe!

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[*] A platform runs from 2d entrance, L. H. to the middle of the stage.—At the termination, (the platform slopes to the stage,) a stump of a tree, with a board stretching to the R—He rushes down, though faintly, to it; falls upon it, the right arm extended over the branch, the fall front to the audience —after a proper recovery, begins, "*I cannot sleep,*" *&c.*

[†] Comes from platform.

[‡] Quickly, to L. H.—afterwards as fancy directs, always remembering to keep the character in view.

[§] A pause—recollection strikes forcibly, and the tender passions are aroused.

Exit. 1st E. R. H.

Before I take leave of my subject and my reader, let me record three unconnected, but characteristic anecdotes.

During one of his provincial engagements,

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* The anger of grief.

† The rage of despair, *under*, and at the conclusion, of the present note, fall in front of the stage—a despairing satisfaction, with a proper pause.

‡ Recollection of his loss, and increased despair, grief and rage mingled.

§ Sullen determination.

¶ A despairing threatening accent.

|| The satisfaction of grief.

** The remembrance of all his former happiness.

Mr. Cooke had offended the public, by disappointing or disgusting them, and on a following night the audience was thin, and the gentlemen in the boxes near the stage, by concert, turned their backs on the scene when Cooke came on. He was dressed for Falstaff, and immediately noticing this unusual appearance, and comprehending the intent, instead of beginning the part, he said in a voice sufficiently audible for those who were reproving him, "Call you this *backing* your friends ?—a plague of such *backing*, I say."

When he was the object of the universal curiosity, soon after his coming out in London, a certain nobleman, filled with that insolence which rank and riches, when not accompanied by worth, generate in little minds, seeing Mr. Cooke, who had stopped to gaze at the pictures in the window of a print shop, sent his servant to desire him to turn round that his lordship might view him. Astonishment first, and then indignation, filled the mind of Cooke. "Tell his lordship," says he, "that if he will step this way, I'll show him what he never saw when he looked in his mirror—*the face of a man.*"

On occasion of some offence which he conceived against the people of Liverpool, he uttered this eloquent burst of invective. "It is a place accursed of heaven, and abhorrent to nature—their wealth is the price of human misery; and there is not a brick in their houses that is not cemented with human blood."

To CONCLUDE. All those high and rare natural endowments, which we have seen united in Mr. Cooke, were obscured and marred by unfortunate circumstances in the early portion of his life, and by long continued habits of indulging those debasing propensities, which those unfortunate circumstances had generated. Though his talents as an actor were obscured and lowered by these causes, he still retained enough of the form impressed by the "bountiful goddess nature," to stamp him in men's minds, the legitimate successor of Garrick: but these causes had made of him, as a man, a mass of contradictions, not merely opposite, but in the extremes of opposition. With manners the most urbane, polished, and refined, and a mind delighting in the society of wit and reason, a large portion of his life was passed in the haunts of vice, or in the solitude imposed by poverty, or sickness, the consequences of voluntary madness; and that benevolence, which opened his heart and hand, to relieve the distresses of his fellow-creatures, was converted into the extremes of anxious parsimony, or indiscriminate profusion: the latter, as more congenial to the natural impulse, prevailing over the former, to the utter exclusion of common sense or justice.

Such was George Frederick Cooke; one among the very many instances on record, of the insufficiency of talents, and genius, without the aid of prudence, to procure happiness to their possessor, or to benefit mankind; otherwise, than by the lesson which their deplorable failure imparts for the instruction of others.

FINIS.

James Gillet, Printer, Crown-court, Fleet-street, London.